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LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

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LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

1552—1618.

BY

JAMES AUGUSTUS ST JOHN.

NEW EDITION IN ONE VOLUME.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1869.

[*The right of Translation is reserved.*]

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.

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TO

SPENSER ST JOHN, ESQ.,

HER MAJESTY'S CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES TO THE REPUBLIC OF HAYTI,

THIS NEW 'LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH'

IS DEDICATED,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FATHER,

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

When the first edition of the present work appeared it was very kindly spoken of by the press, and favourably received by the public. My aim having been to tell Raleigh's story with perfect impartiality and good faith, it afforded me the greatest possible satisfaction to perceive that my intention was recognized by criticism, and that it was admitted I had upon the whole fulfilled my design. My estimate of Raleigh's character the critics generally acknowledged was not too high, and the way in which I found myself compelled to speak of his enemies and persecutors met with equal approval. I have therefore not thought it necessary in this new edition to make any alterations, but have contented myself with removing some slight errors of the press which had crept into the first. Should any important suggestions be hereafter made by the press, I shall, if the opportunity be allowed me, be careful to avail myself of them, in order to render my narrative as worthy as possible of the great man, whose conduct and actions I have undertaken to describe.

Since the first publication of this biography, another Life of Sir Walter Raleigh has been laid before the public. This performance must have been produced some years ago, since the author is unacquainted with the discoveries recently made at Simancas and Madrid, which have thrown an entirely new light on the latter portions of Raleigh's life.

Another proof that the work has not been written lately is supplied by a statement made in the Introduction, namely, that all recent biographies of Raleigh are mere abridgments of Oldys'. Though this may have been correct when the author wrote, it would, if made now, be wholly irreconcilable with truth, since, to go no farther than my own work, not only have I consulted an immense number of documents, unknown to Oldys, but to Cayley, and even to the writer of the recent biography. A majority of these may have been inaccessible, but there are others which lay within the reach of ordinary research.

In spite, however, of all that has been done, there are some points connected with Raleigh's career upon which no light has been thrown from any quarter: among them are the date and place of his marriage; the cause or causes of the breach between him and Cecil; and the reason or reasons which determined the latter to condemn him to ruin and imprisonment, while he spared his life. Perhaps documents may exist which, if discovered, would remove the obscurity that still involves these and several other questions connected with his story.

St John's Wood.

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LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, STUDIES, AND MARTIAL DISCIPLINE.

Sir Walter Raleigh was born in the year 1552, the year in which the Duke of Somerset was executed, while Mary at St Edmondsbury sat in doubt and gloom, watching the progress of her young brother's disease, which, if it terminated fatally, as she probably hoped, would leave her mistress of England. Elizabeth and Leicester were then nineteen years of age;* Mary Queen of Scots was eleven, while many of the men with whom Raleigh was afterwards associated were yet to be born—Sir Philip Sidney two, Bacon nine years later, Shakespeare twelve, James Stuart fourteen, and Essex fifteen. The mention of these names suggests a world of adventure, thought, speculation, and crime.

Raleigh rose when Europe was full of action, and played his part in it, sometimes nobly, sometimes otherwise, but always with fierce daring and recklessness. In active bravery he had no superior, either then or at any other time. He has been compared with many men, but resembled none; the mixture of his character was *sui generis;* he distinguished himself for many virtues, and many vices, now

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' and Collins, 'Sidney State Papers,' i. 44, suggest that Elizabeth and Leicester were born on the same day and hour.

displaying magnanimity and generosity, now pride, vindictiveness, and cruelty.

Yet such as he was, the eyes of all England were turned on him while he lived, admiringly always, pityingly sometimes, lovingly never; there having been something in his temper and disposition, which, however great and glorious his actions might be, rendered him essentially unpopular. It might be his pride, it might be the remoteness of his views and opinions from those of the vulgar—for Raleigh had the reputation of espousing strange doctrines, and of being exceedingly sparing in his beliefs—it might be his hostility to Essex, to de Vere, to the Scotchmen who came in with James, to James himself, and to all upholders and abettors of the Spanish monarchy.

Raleigh in sentiments and feelings resembled his great mistress, though he differed from her totally in manners, since, while he scarcely possessed a friend, she charmed the hearts of all around her, and was the idol of her people. His enemies were numerous and virulent almost beyond example; they denounced him as a sophist, as a wizard, as a necromancer, as an atheist,* and in our own times there have not been wanting those who have ventured to repeat the calumny.

While he lay captive in the Bloody Tower, everything vile and mean considered itself privileged to trample on his great name; a curtain was purposely drawn over his prison life; he was respited from the block to writhe awhile in darkness, and then to be brought forth to light, to misfortune, and the block again. His persecutors meanwhile, bedizened with titles and oppressed with opulence, played out their parts, and fell away, some to oblivion, others to infamy. Raleigh went forth to the new world in search of gold, missed it, and was executed for his failure. According to some he deserved his fate, though not on the ground on which it came to him.† I shall examine the whole tissue of

* Lodge.

† Macaulay, 'Essays,' ii. 340.

circumstances leading from Hayes Farm to Palace Yard, after which the reader will, I trust, be placed in a position to decide whether or not we can say of Raleigh as Suetonius does of Cæsar, "Jure cæsus est."*

Before a man vindicates his right to fame, people usually take but slight notice of him, or the scenes of his early life. Despite therefore of his handsome person and brilliant qualities, Raleigh excited in his youth little attention from such as might have transmitted an account of him to posterity.

Of Hayes,† the farmhouse in which he was born, no description of an old date has been preserved. It stands at the distance of about a mile from Budleigh, on a level piece of ground, overshadowed by ancient trees, and surrounded by copses and young plantations. While grappling with the hard realities of life in his perilous ascent from those lowly groves and meadows to the pinnacles of power and glory, Raleigh never bestowed a line on his birthplace, though he loved the spot, and, surrounded by all the splendours of Elizabeth's court, sought to purchase it from its then possessor, in the vain hope that the head which never knew repose might there at last find rest, when satiated with the honours and intoxicating vanities of the world.‡

A wayfarer from London who, like most Londoners, appreciates whatever is touching and beautiful in the country, pauses awhile in his pilgrimage to the Land's End to visit the spot where Raleigh was born. His description is interesting: "Turning off," he says, "by a lane to the left, we reach the church (of Budleigh); another mile brings you to Hayes Barton, Raleigh's birthplace. It is a solitary farmhouse, once the manor-house, built in the picturesque style of four hundred years ago, with gabled wings and portico, thatched roof and mullioned windows, and a heavy oaken

* In Vitâ Cæsaris, § 76. † Prince, 'Worthies of Devon,' p. 666.
‡ Letter to Duke, Wood, 'Athen. Oxon.,' i. 435.

door thickly studded with iron nails, standing at the end of a garden, partly concealed by a few old trees that rise from among the herbs and flowers . . . . The whole scene, shut in by low swelling hills and lines of tall hedges, is eminently rural."*

Though Raleigh does not mention by name the place of his birth, it may be inferred from more than one of his poems that he often, with something like regret, contrasted with its quiet delights the dazzling but delusive splendours of a court-life. While writing the following passage, his memory, we can scarcely doubt, was filled with images of the swift Otter, of the many nameless runnels that feed it, and the rich scenery through which they flow.

Fly from our country pastimes, fly,
Sad troop of human misery :
  Come serene looks,
  Clear as the crystal brooks,
Or the pure azured heaven that smiles to see
The rich attendance of our poverty.
  Peace and a secure mind,
  Which all men seek, we only find.

Abused mortals ! did you know
Where joy, heart's-ease, and comforts grow,
  You'd scorn proud towers,
  And seek them in these bowers,
Where winds sometimes our woods perhaps may shake,
But blustering care could never tempest make ;
  Nor murmurs e'er come nigh us,
  Saving of fountains that glide by us.†

Our curiosity, stimulated by his after-life, would gladly be led back to the incidents of his childhood, but his contemporaries had little taste for such topics, and preserve one and all a provoking silence. My own researches have led to the discovery of but one fact, and that, after all, belongs rather to the scanty records of his father's life than to his. While the little Walter, then but two years old, was

* Walter White, 'A Londoner's Walk to the Land's End,' pp. 97-100.
† 'Works,' viii. 697.

toddling about among the flowers and beehives, under the shadow of old trees in front of the Barton, the movements of a patriotic rebellion were agitating the counties of Devon and Cornwall. His kinsman, Sir Peter Carew, a person of large following in those parts, was conspiring with Sir Thomas Wyatt to organize resistance against the Spanish Philip, who, they doubted not, would attempt the introduction of despotism into England.

The views of the conspirators differed, and led to separate courses of action, Wyatt determining to defer his rising till Philip's arrival, while Carew counselled an immediate appeal to arms. Returning, therefore, to his own county, Sir Peter, with Sir Gawain Carew and others, began the insurrection; but being disappointed in the number of his adherents, Sir Peter soon perceived that the game was up, and that he must fly the country. To accomplish this design he applied to Raleigh's father, who possessing a bark,* conveyed his brave relative to Weymouth, whence he passed over into Flanders. Ultimately, however, he fell at Brussels into the hands of Philip, through whose unusual lenity he was suffered to return to England, where he rose to distinction under Elizabeth. Raleigh's childhood and boyhood were passed in that sweet obscurity which is the best nurse of original thought. Around him on all sides lay strong incentives to speculation and action; Dartmoor in the north with its Phœnician traditions, to the south the ocean, afterwards to become the field of his greatest triumphs and disasters.

No one who has seen Devonshire can forget its beauty, its green lanes, its clear sparkling streams, gurgling between rare plants towards the sea; its light feathery woods, its fairy hollows and green knolls, a combination which makes it the paradise of England. Here it was that Raleigh strayed, book in hand, imbibing learning with that irre-

* Sir Thomas Denys to the Council, January 28th. Sir John St Leger to the Council, January 29th, 1554. MSS. State Paper Office.

pressible eagerness which led him throughout life to deny himself the amount of sleep which a majority of mankind deem necessary; yet looking through and beyond learning to the fierce delight of the battle-field, the thunder of the deck, where life, and all that life holds dear, are staked against ambition. The Raleighs, with nearly all their belongings, were Protestants, though not Puritans, and it is fair to conjecture that Walter only acted in the spirit of his family, when a few years later he tinged his maiden sword with Catholic blood on the battle-fields of France.

In 1566 Raleigh, then in his fourteenth year, repaired to Oriel College, Oxford,* where he seems to have commenced that friendship with Sir Philip Sidney to which nothing could put a period but death. They were both studious, both proud, both eager for fame; but Sidney, with some outbreaks of fierceness,† had the gentler nature and softer manners, while Raleigh had the more iron frame, fiery temperament, and unattractive habits of thought. Still the traditions of the University long continued to represent him as the ornament of its youthful students, and spoke of his proficiency in the most difficult and the most popular branches of knowledge, philosophy and eloquence.‡

One anecdote only is related of his college life: when short of money, he borrowed, we are told, an academic gown from a fellow-student, and on leaving the university forgot to return or pay for it. Our authority for this story is a suspicious one, being no other than that credulous and reckless gossip, John Aubrey,§ who has chronicled all the scandal of half-a-dozen generations. Yet the story may be true, for he assures us it was told him by the lender of the gown, a Worcestershire squire.

Much has been written against the academical studies

* Prince, 'Worthies of Devon,' p. 667.
† See his letter to Molineux, 'Sidney State Papers,' i. 256.
‡ Wood, 'Athenæ Oxonienses,' i. 226.
§ Letters from the Bodleian, ii. 517.

of those times, which though imperfect were yet compatible with great intellectual development. Wolsey, More, Burleigh, Sidney, Raleigh, and Bacon himself, sprang from the womb of the decried system. Shakespeare, though its teaching came to him through irregular channels, had his imagination fed by its dews, and his understanding enlightened by its philosophy. Whatever improvements, therefore, may have been made in later times, it is scarcely matter of doubt, that the results have not in all things equalled those which crowned the old method of study.

After remaining at the University three years, Raleigh quitted it without a degree, and in the beginning of 1569 repaired to France. The two leading forms of Christianity were then drenching the French soil with blood,* one to repress, the other to establish liberty of conscience, and the young English soldier immediately took up his position under the standard of freedom. Four women were then directing or misdirecting the energies of Europe. Catherine de Medici,† widow of Henri II., forty-nine years of age, was organizing and stimulating that bigotry which ripened three years later into the most detestable crime on record. Elizabeth, in her thirty-sixth year, standing proudly at the head of the Protestant world, secretly or openly devoted the powers of her vigorous mind, and the resources of her kingdom, to deliver mankind from the yoke of Rome. In the same cause likewise laboured Jeanne d'Albret, widow of Antoine de Bourbon, and mother to Henri of Navarre, who laid aside the pursuits proper to her sex, in order to secure to her young son an independent crown, and a religion from which he afterwards, through secular motives, apostatized. Jeanne was now leading a man's life in the camp of the Huguenots,

* Lodge, 'Illustrations of British History,' i. 437.

† This princess, like our Catherine of Aragon, was a great eater, though she endeavoured by much walking to mitigate the effect of her gourmandize. What spiritualism is to the superstitious women of the present day astrology was to Catherine and her contemporaries. Raumer, 'History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,' i. 265, 268.

inflaming their zeal, and bringing them such succour as her woman's eloquence or policy could insure. Mary Stuart,* who through her crimes and follies had come to be a prisoner in England, exerted nevertheless a powerful influence over the counsels of Christendom, whose statesmen for years converted her into a pretext for disturbing the peace of this country, and directing the assassin's knife against Elizabeth's breast.

Raleigh found among his comrades in France many gallant Scotchmen, who, hating with no common hatred the superstition of the Vatican, flocked to the scene of the civil wars, where they defended with indomitable fortitude the posts confided to them by the Huguenot generals.

On the other hand, the Catholic cause attracted numerous volunteers from Spain and other countries, so that the struggle going on might be fairly considered a conflict of principles as opposite in their nature as evil and good.

On the thirteenth of March, 1569, Raleigh, in the costume of a Huguenot trooper, fought his first battle against the enemies of his country's faith, and beheld some of the worst excesses to which men are impelled by wars of religion. Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, who led the charge of the Huguenot cavalry, having had his horse killed under him, was taken prisoner with his arm in a sling from a previous bruise, and one of his legs broken. In that condition it might have been expected that the hostile general would have received him with a soldier's sympathy, instead of which he encouraged and rejoiced at his assassination, and breathed forth a pious vow to erect a chapel on the spot where his kinsman was murdered. He then caused his dead body to be mounted on an emaciated she ass, and paraded through the army for the entertainment of the Catholic troops.†

After witnessing this display of chivalry by the Duc

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth in Kennett,' ii. 370; Froude, 'Reign of Elizabeth.'

† Sismondi, 'Hist. des Franc.' xxiii. 196; De Thou, iii. 237.

d'Anjou, one of Elizabeth's unsuccessful suitors, Raleigh retired with the defeated army, which for six months was unable again to take the field. On the third of the October following, near the village of Moncontour,* the Huguenots and Catholics once more stood face to face in the field, Coligni † commanding in chief, and Prince Louis de Nassau occupying the post which was held at Jarnac by Louis de Bourbon. The present Emperor of the French, who has studied and described the movements of the Protestants and Catholics in that war, attributes the success of the latter to the superiority of their artillery. Much may be said in support of his opinion; but at Moncontour other causes contributed to produce the result. The Huguenot soldiers were so ill-paid that for an hour and a half on the very morning of that battle there was a mutiny in their camp,‡ the men refusing to take the field until some portion of the arrears due to them should be discharged, and their officers urging them by all the motives which men usually hold sacred to march against the enemy. To an army so demoralized it is no way surprising that defeat came. The rout, in fact, was so complete and disastrous, that, but for the skill and valour of Louis de Nassau, defeat would have been converted into a general slaughter. At the head of a thousand horse, the German prince broke through the enemy's lines, and by a masterly retreat saved from destruction full one-half of the Huguenot army.§

Two days after the catastrophe of Moncontour, Sir Henry Champernoun, with a hundred gentlemen volunteers, arrived from England, and received from the widowed Queen of Navarre || a distinguished welcome in the Protestant camp. It has been said that of those hundred gentlemen Raleigh

* Napoleon III. Œuvres, iv. 286.

† D'Andelot, brother of Coligni, was poisoned by an Italian priest. 'Cabala,' p. 152; De la Noue in 'Petitot,' xxxiv. 253.

‡ De la Noue, xxxiv. 272.

§ Raleigh, 'History of the World,' vi. 211. Nassau was reported in England to have been slain, but through Rochelle the error was soon corrected, 'Cabala,' p. 159.

|| De Thou, iii. 292; Camden. 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii.

was one, but erroneously, since he had already been engaged in two battles before the arrival of his kinsman.

From the date of this battle we lose sight of Raleigh for six years, save that for a single moment he appears in the passes of Languedoc, during one of those frays which characterized the French civil wars, that consisted less in actual battles than in a wasting series of skirmishes that decided nothing. While crossing the mountains, Raleigh and his comrades came suddenly upon the hiding-place of a body of Catholics, who with their provisions, plate, and jewels, had taken refuge in a cavern, the entrance to which lay at the bottom of a deep glen. The followers of Coligni and Louis de Nassau were not exempt from the love of fun as well as of mischief; they amused themselves, therefore, by smoking the Catholics out of their retreat with faggots of brushwood and bundles of straw, which they kindled at the cave's mouth. As the smoke thickened the prisoners became more and more restless, till at length, unable to breathe any longer the fiery atmosphere, they rushed out in despair, and purchased the mercy of the Huguenots by surrendering to them their property.*

With the culminating horrors † of the struggle we need not in this narrative busy ourselves, since although Raleigh with his fellow-Protestants must certainly have beheld, from no great distance, the massacres organized by Charles IX. and his mother which reddened nearly the whole face of France,‡ the place of his concealment is unknown; some have conjectured that, with Sir Philip Sidney, young Lord Wharton, and others, he found refuge during the bloody twenty-fourth of August at the house of Walsingham, in Paris; but I

* Raleigh, 'History of the World,' v. 355.

† To intimate that Heaven approved of the massacre, the Orthodox fabricated a miracle, forcing white thorn to blossom out of season by irrigating it with warm water. De Thou, iii. 673.

‡ Massacres like that of Paris were perpetrated at Orleans, Rouen, Meaux, Macon, Lyons, Romans, Valence, Toulouse, and the other principal cities of France. Achille de Gaman in 'Petitot,' xxxiv. 314.

am inclined to believe he was at the time in the south, where the Huguenots were generally in sufficient force to hold their ground against the myrmidons of Pope and King.*

Few in those days were untainted by the disease of superstition. Three months after the massacre astronomers, no less than the unscientific multitude, were startled by the sudden appearance of a bright star,† which, on the evening of November the eleventh, flashed upon the eye with the swiftness of a meteor, equalling Sirius in lustre, and augmenting in splendour as it advanced menacingly through space, till its brilliance exceeded that of Jupiter at its brightest, and was visible at noonday. To interpret this phenomenon surpassed the science of the age. Heaven, it was believed, had sent the celestial messenger as the indicator and precursor of its vengeance; and when Charles IX. descended to his grave in blood,‡ the meaning of the portent was supposed to be understood. During sixteen months the new star glared nightly in the sky; but after delivering its message, retired gradually into the fathomless solitudes of the universe, and has never since been seen.§ Even now, the laws which regulate the movements of periodical stars are far from being understood, though their periodicity has been ascertained, and their number discovered to be considerable.

* Sir Dudley Digges, 'Complete Ambassador,' p. 294.

† Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii. 446.

‡ Beside the massacre of August 24th, no act of cruelty can appear startling, yet it may deserve mention that Charles, with the whole royal family, went forth to witness by torchlight the hanging of two noble gentlemen, Briquemont and Cavannes.

§ Sir John Herschel, 'Astronomy,' § 827.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST CONFLICT ON THE OCEAN.

The youth of seventeen had now ripened into the man of twenty-three, who, having served his apprenticeship to war, left the blood-stained fields of France, and returned in company, as I conjecture, with George Gascoigne to London. For reasons no longer susceptible of explanation, Raleigh took chambers in the Middle Temple, or there became the guest of some friend, since he addressed from thence a complimentary poem to Gascoigne, which with several similar pieces was prefixed to his celebrated "Steel-Glass."

Our literature as yet was uncouth, owing its existence chiefly to imitation, and exhibiting itself in fantastic forms, too generally coarse ones. Still several noblemen, from Sackville to de Vere,* sought from time to time some taste of that fame which poetry confers. Sidney, Spenser, and Raleigh let loose their fancies into the language, and by sonnets, eclogues, and impassioned love ditties, paved the way for the 'Fairy Queen,' and 'Romeo and Juliet.'

The rude forms exhibited by literature were the outward expression of the rude forms of society. There was little real refinement in court or town, less refinement in speculation than in conduct, still less in manners than in either. Flattery, an appendage of barbarism, to the extent of its influence, begets twisted and distorted modes of speech, revealing the throes and pangs with which the soul gives birth

* Puttenham, 'Art of English Poesy,' p. 49.

to a lie. Elizabeth lives in all the literature of the time, and the entrance of her image into an author's mind appears to have been the signal for unnatural straining. No one was satisfied to describe her as she was; and the hyperbolical language in which the charms of this free-living vestal were delineated became the pattern of the style in which all other women were described by their poetical lovers.*

Raleigh yields less to this infatuation than most of his contemporaries, and accordingly may still be read with truer pleasure. Sidney is more fanciful, but considerably less impassioned. Spenser, who in many phases of his intellectual development resembles Shelley, is exquisite in his pictures of external things, playing with poetical pantheism; that is, finding sparks of divinity everywhere, and inviting them freely to flash their divine splendour into his verse.† Yet he seldom comes near that well-spring of passion which contemporaries discovered underlying Raleigh's verse. The fascination of literature was, however, less powerful for Raleigh than the love of war. To check the progress of Don Juan of Austria in the Low Countries, Sir John Norris, with a small army of English and Scots, crossed the sea, and on Lammas Day, 1578, inflicted so severe a defeat on the Spanish general, that he is believed to have died from vexation in less than two months.‡ Of the victorious army Raleigh formed one, but beyond this fact nothing is known.

Events, however, were now preparing which were to bear the young aspirant of Hayes Farm to those fields of action on which he was afterwards to earn pre-eminent distinction.

Two documents, bearing exactly the same date, open up

* See Puttenham, 'Partheniades,' p. 24.

† Puttenham, 'Art of Poetry,' p. 51.

‡ His death took place October 1st, 1578. Birch, 'Memoirs of Elizabeth,' ii. 15. In spite of their services, the English were so ill paid by the States, that several regiments mutinied, while three hundred men went over in a body to the enemy. Ibid., p. 25.

before us two vistas, which, after running parallel for a time, approximate and blend into one upon the horizon of Raleigh's fortunes. It is not at first easy to perceive how a letter written by a Jesuit at Madrid to another Jesuit at Rome should connect itself with Raleigh's story; yet so it was, for the letter discloses the existence of a project which threatened the independence of England, and aimed at the extinction of her faith.

The other document originated in the same spirit, but as its birthplace was different, so likewise was its aim, one being intended to thwart the policy of Elizabeth, and put a period to her career, the other to do the same office for Philip II.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert,* Raleigh's half-brother, thirteen years older than himself, had long turned his thoughts to sea voyages, especially in the direction of America. While in London, he and Raleigh were doubtless much together, and the subjects upon which their conversations chiefly turned may safely be assumed to have been the best means of breaking the power of Spain, and founding for England a colonial empire. Both were readers, not to kill that time which dies too soon of itself, but to qualify themselves to do great things, and leave their names written, whether in tears or blood, in the history of the world. To learn how effectually to wound Spain, and contract the circle of her dominion, the brothers assiduously studied her language and geographical literature, and inflamed their minds with visions of spoil and conquest, to be realized in the New World.

Gilbert was no slight proficient in the art of writing, and on the matters with which he dealt could write vigorously; yet he never acquired that ease, dash, and voluble eloquence which distinguished Raleigh's productions from youth to age. Considering the literary character of the

* On this distinguished navigator, see Hooker, Supp. to 'Irish Chronicle.' Holingshed, vi. 367.

performance of which I have to speak, I feel persuaded it should be attributed to the younger of the half-brothers, a belief in which I am strengthened by one circumstance in the document itself. The signature is that of Gilbert, but apparently by the same pen the name has been attempted to be obliterated, though it is still legible. My interpretation of this fact is, that Gilbert, after the 'Discourse' had served its purpose, took the first step towards restoring the credit of it to its real author.

Be this as it may, the 'Discourse' is one of the most remarkable papers in the Record Office. Of morality, either public or private, it has not a particle. Assuming that the leading object of the British Government should be to destroy its enemies, whether open or disguised, it boldly points out what the writer considers the best means of obtaining the end in view. To found colonies, and enable British power to strike root in America, being the aim proposed, a plan is laid down, feasible though complicated, by which the design is to be converted from theory into practice. The fact must not be lost sight of, that England was then ostensibly at peace with France and Spain, though all the term implied in the vocabulary of that age, was a cessation of hostilities. Elizabeth and her ministers knew that the most Catholic and most Christian kings panted for nothing so eagerly as for the conquest or overthrow of England; to bring about which there was no amount of guilt they would not cheerfully incur; so much must be borne in mind, to soften the censure which the audacious ethics of the youthful disciple of Machiavelli may provoke.

The 'Discourse,' in the most debonnair manner, takes it for granted that our Government would entertain no scruple to take a leaf out of the book of the Jesuit, provided it could be enabled to shield itself from material ill-consequences. Raleigh,* as will presently be shown, was already familiar

* That is, allowing my conjecture to be right that he was author of the discourse.

with most of Elizabeth's leading courtiers, such as Lord Charles Howard of Effingham, Lord Compton, Lord Windsor, Lord Henry Howard, young Cecil, son of the minister, Francis Southwell, with many others; and if any of these men were made privy to his scheme of plunder and conquest, they would certainly have regarded it rather with approbation than otherwise. Without much preface, the writer enters upon his project, which is, that her Majesty should fit out a fleet, ostensibly for discovery alone. It is to consist of a few ships, and those manned, armed, and victualled, conformably to its object; but, at a given latitude on the ocean, this harmless squadron is to fall in with a more formidable armament, equipped, and sent out secretly, with a force of five or six thousand men on board. After junction, the united fleet is to proceed on its errand, bold and reckless, it must be confessed, and one which even the loose practice of that age could scarcely have considered defensible.

To supply the want created by their religion, which, when red-blooded animals may not be eaten, permits its votaries to kill and eat white-blooded animals, the Spaniards, French, and Portuguese employed a large portion of their shipping in the fisheries of Newfoundland. On reaching the banks, it was customary for the crews to take to their boats, or go on shore to cure their fish, leaving a few hands on board, rather as sentinels than as defenders. Knowing this, Raleigh's plan was to make a sudden dash at these unprotected vessels, take possession of them with their ladings, return to Europe, and dispose of the whole in the ports of Holland and Zealand. If found advisable, some portion of the booty might be vended at out-of-the-way harbours on the English coast, where her Majesty's vice-admirals might be instructed to connive at its introduction into England.

With the funds thus obtained, Raleigh suggested that Gilbert and he might be empowered to fit out a larger fleet,

with which he affirmed it would be practicable to conquer the Spanish possessions in America, then grouped together, in popular language, under the name of West Indies. "If your Highness will permit me, with my associates," he says, "either openly or covertly to perform the said enterprise; then with the gains thereof there may easily be such a competent company transported to the West Indies as may be able, not only to dispossess the Spaniards thereof, but also to possess your Majesty and realm therewith." We then catch a glimpse of those dreams of El Dorado with which Raleigh's imagination may be said to have gilded his whole life—those mines of gold and silver which adventurers and explorers expected to find in America at every step.

To throw dust in the eyes of Spain, Elizabeth was to affect much indignation at these adventurers, whom she was to disclaim, and denounce as pirates, or describe as servants of the Prince of Orange. The admirals who should countenance or succour them were to be imprisoned, and generally everything was to be done which might screen the Government from the charge of collusion with the infringers of treaty. Raleigh foresaw that Elizabeth might oppose some objection to his policy, based on conscientious motives. Of this difficulty he gets rid in the following off-hand manner:—

"I hold it as lawful in Christian policy to prevent a mischief betimes as to revenge it too late, especially seeing that God himself is a party in the common quarrels now afoot, and his enemies' disposition towards your Highness and His Church manifestly seen, although, by God's merciful providence, not yet thoroughly felt."

Warming with his subject, the writer throws a prophetic glance into the future, and discerns in beatific vision England's acquisition of the empire of the ocean. What was to him prophecy is to us matter of history; he showed what by a wise policy might be forthwith accomplished; it took

centuries to ripen his project, but the world witnessed the ripening of it, when not a hostile flag in Christendom could flout the breezes on the ocean in defiance of British power. Weighing, at a later period in the Bloody Tower, the chances of a great general who should invade England, his decision was less sanguine than in 1577, when he wrote thus:—

"This realm, being an island, shall be discharged from all foreign pillage, if all the monarchies of the world should join against us, *so long as Ireland shall be in safe keeping*, the league with Scotland maintained, and further amity concluded with the Prince of Orange and the King of Denmark, by which means also your Majesty shall engraft and glue to your crown in effect all the northern and southern traffic of the world, so that none shall then be able to cross the seas but subject to your Highness's devotion."

Familiar with the besetting sin of the times, Raleigh concludes his 'Discourse' with these earnest and brilliant words: "If your Majesty like to do it all, then would I wish your Highness to consider that delay doth oftentimes prevent the performance of good things, for the wings of man's life are plumed with the feathers of death."*

To uphold that high state of prosperity which Raleigh foretold for England, he laid it down as a necessary condition that Ireland should be in safe keeping. But how was it to be rendered safe? The experience of five hundred years has not even yet solved the problem. In those days hypocrisy played a conspicuous part in the great scheme of human action, and Raleigh evidently prided himself on the adroitness with which he recommended it to his sovereign; but his conception of the thing was poor indeed, compared with the stupendous theories of deceit and delusion that issued from the workshops of the Vatican and the Escorial.

While the design of the Armada was slowly taking shape in the mind of Philip, he consented to soothe the impatience

* 'Discourse to the Queen,' November 6th, 1577. State Paper Office.

of Rome by small supplies of human victims, offered up from time to time on the altars of bigotry and ambition. Simultaneously with Raleigh's plan for depriving the Catholics of their fast-day luxuries, Spain and Rome were contriving how to open up the fountains of misery in Ireland, under pretence of promoting the interests of religion. Several Irish gentlemen, the prototypes of our Fenians, were incessantly flitting about the Continent, exerting their aboriginal blarney, now at one court, now at another, to obtain a charitable contingent of rascals to aid their countrymen in expelling the English. I have said that a letter written from Madrid, of the same date with Raleigh's 'Discourse,' indicated the beginning of proceedings in which the young adventurer was to be concerned. The letter likewise indicated, both to writer and recipient, death amid the Irish bogs, though for the present it inspired them with no small hope. Dr Sanders, who, in his efforts to disturb Elizabeth's realm, appears to have had a weary time of it, complains to his correspondent, Dr Allen, of the strange slowness and procrastination of kings. "The Vicar of Christ," he says, "was much swifter in his eagerness to shed blood," and therefore would consent to collect and despatch into Ireland two thousand men by way of earnest.* This force the Doctor laments to think would hardly suffice to do much against England; but in the sister island, where Catholicism and barbarism were more rampant, he felt cheered by the persuasion that something might be accomplished. Not being gifted with the skill to read the secret mind of kings, he supposed Philip to be in a state of coma, observing that he was as much afraid of war as a child of fire.

Though the navigators on one hand, and the doctors on the other, were impatient to be at work, public affairs advanced with their accustomed slowness; it was long doubtful which party should win in the race of procrastination, though ultimately Spain vindicated to herself supe-

* Sanders to Allen, Nov. 6, 1577. State Paper Office.

riority in postponing the day of action. Gilbert and his friends brought into play all the activity of their characters in organizing their darling expedition, and evidently obtained Elizabeth's approval, since she permitted two of her near relatives, Henry and Francis, sons of Sir Francis Knollys, to take part in the enterprise. This, which seemed the harbinger of success, proved the ruin of the whole scheme. Gilbert naturally looked also among his kinsmen for officers to take command in his fleet, and secured the co-operation of three, Walter and George Raleigh, and Denny, one of his Devonshire cousins.

By the end of summer, 1578, Gilbert's fleet, consisting of eleven sail, manned with five hundred mariners and soldiers, assembled on the coast of Devonshire. What such an armament might have effected may be conjectured from the achievements of Hawkins and Drake, but whatever may have been the mental reach of Gilbert, or the daring of Raleigh, it may be doubted whether their want of practical knowledge would not, under any circumstances, have led to disaster. Among the commanders discord prevailed, so that though ready for sea as early as the end of September, it was nearly two months later before the admiral found it practicable to hoist sail. The interval was consumed by bickerings, arising from the want of authority in the principal leaders. As was to be expected, the seamen who took part in such expeditions consisted of the most reckless frequenters of the ocean, who fled to its waves from the gaoler and the hangman — blasphemers, ruffians, assassins — to whom piracy furnished the only congenial occupation. By way of affording Gilbert a taste of their quality, they filled the whole town of Plymouth with brawl and riot, insulting the night-watch, and crowning their doings with murder. The Earl of Bedford, then Lord-lieutenant of Devonshire, on complaint of the towns-people, demanded that the malefactors should be delivered up to justice; but Henry Knollys, to whose ship they belonged, set the civil authorities at

defiance, and thus, by insuring impunity to his crew, encouraged them to commit further excesses.

Towards Gilbert himself Knollys behaved with no less rudeness and insolence, which sometimes deepened into the grossest vulgarity. He boasted that, owing to his royal kinship, he was worth twenty knights; and on one occasion, when Sir Humphrey invited him to dinner, declined his invitation, with the offensive remark, that "he had money to pay for his own dinner, and that the admiral might keep his trenchers for such beggars as stood in need of his hospitality." It is matter of surprise that Captain Denny, Gilbert's own cousin, should have joined the party of such a man as Knollys, and have pushed his contempt of subordination so far as to send a formal challenge to the admiral. Every day these bickerings threatened to end in blood; in fact on one occasion, while Sir Humphrey was absent on business, Henry Knollys, being second in command, was on the point of hanging Captain Miles Morgan at the yard-arm, and was only prevented by the admiral's return.

With a view, if not to put a stop to these quarrels, at least to set himself right with the court, Gilbert submitted the matter to the decision of the mayor of Plymouth, who, after hearing the evidence on both sides, pronounced judgment in favour of the admiral; upon which a certificate* was drawn up, signed by the magistrate himself, by Walter Raleigh, and several other persons of respectability. It had now become evident that the fleet must be dismembered, even though the whole enterprise should thereby be shipwrecked. Henry Knollys, with his brother Francis, Captain Denny, and other officers, broke away with four ships from the admiral, and betook themselves to the ocean, with the intention, it was supposed, of reaping, in defiance of law, whatever harvest piracy might supply. The letters written during these troubles by Sir Humphrey Gilbert to Walsingham are conceived in a deprecatory spirit, in the hope of

* November, 1578. MSS., State Paper Office.

allaying any anger which, through the force of blood, it might be feared, Elizabeth would feel; but she was too just to yield to any such ebullitions of temper. Gilbert she knew was a brave and faithful servant, for which reason she stood by him, and would suffer no motive derived from mere relationship to turn her from the path of duty.

At length, on the 19th of November,* Gilbert, with seven ships and three hundred and fifty men, set sail from Plymouth.

No incident in the life of Raleigh is enveloped more thoroughly in mystery than the circumstances of this enterprise. After quitting the shores of England, in what direction did the fleet sail? Did it proceed towards the banks of Newfoundland? or, taking a south-westerly course, did it, with the design above explained, make at once for the West Indies? From some facts, alluded to in the after-part of Raleigh's story, it may, I think, be inferred, that, despite the inadequacy of the means at his command, Sir Humphrey Gilbert plunged into the great undertaking, by a description of which Raleigh had sought to enthrall the imagination of Elizabeth. Without doubt, Raleigh, in one way or another, made himself intimately acquainted with the islands of the West Indies, as well as the havens on the main, and except this we know of no occasion on which he could have acquired personal knowledge of them before the date of his first voyage to Guiana. Captain Barlow, addressing to Raleigh, in 1584, an account of the voyage which, in company with Amadas, he made to Virginia, assumes his patron to be thoroughly familiar with the islands of the Mexican Gulf. So afterwards, when Gondomar was labouring to prevent Raleigh's last expedition, he appeared before the council with a book in his hand, describing the outrages perpetrated by him in his two voyages to the West Indies, by which I think he could have meant no others than those of 1578 and 1595. Again, previously to 1586, a book, now lost, was

* Gilbert to Walsingham, Nov. 12th, 1578. State Paper Office.

written, entitled, 'Sir Walter Raleigh's Voyage to the West Indies.' From the contents of this volume in the handwriting of the celebrated navigator, Sir James Lancaster, we discover that it was not the narrative of a voyage actually performed, but the platform of an enterprise which the writer wished to be undertaken; nevertheless, from the whole tenor of these 'Heads of Chapters' it seems clear that the reasoning is based in great measure on the information of an eye-witness.

An incident which befell Gilbert's fleet, probably in the seas of Tropical America, furnishes the reason why impenetrable obscurity was suffered to rest on nearly all the circumstances of this expedition: in the spring, apparently of 1579, our countrymen came to action with a Spanish fleet, when, either through inferiority in strength or scientific seamanship, they were defeated, with the loss of one of their principal ships, as well as of the gallant Captain Miles Morgan, who was slain in the engagement. Towards the end of spring, or beginning of summer, Gilbert and Raleigh, with the wreck of their fleet, returned to England, where in spite of ill-success, their courage and enterprise won for them admiration and influence in the best circles.

A few years before, Gilbert had presented to the Government a treatise in which he undertook to prove the existence of a north-west passage to China and India, strengthening his own arguments by traditions and conjectures, which he found in such writers as Gemma Fricius, Pliny, and Cornelius Nepos. Raleigh shared his brother's belief respecting the north-west passage; and, in the seventeenth chapter of his lost book, pointed out that double method of discovery, which after a profuse sacrifice of life and treasure has at length in our day been crowned with success. The great aim being to advocate the policy of colonizing North America, he mentions as an incidental advantage that, "By these colonies the north-west passage to Cathay and China may easily, quickly, and perfectly be searched out, as well by river and overland as by sea."

CHAPTER III.

HIS GAY ASSOCIATES IN LONDON.

A MAN whose story soon afterwards came to be closely interwoven with that of Raleigh, who took the hazardous step of introducing him to Leicester, was at this time immersed in transactions which had they been known would have barred all intimacy. While Raleigh and Gilbert were labouring to extend the power of Elizabeth, this man, Sir Warham St Leger, had linked himself with those who sought her life. Like many other youthful adventurers, incapable of distinguishing the delusions of romance from the promptings of justice and honour, he eagerly fell in with those who discovered something chivalrous in venturing their necks for a captive queen. When Raleigh returned from France, where every Popish cabaret rang with the name of Mary Stuart, he found London literally swarming with such adventurers, though both experience and principle kept him out of the circle of their influence.

St Leger, of lighter mood and feebler intellect, was drawn into the great vortex of the times which eddied perpetually about the gallows and the block. The foreign ambassadors then in London, especially those of France and Spain, made use of their diplomatic privileges to attempt the overthrow of the established Government.* On the Surrey side of the Thames, at the corner of a field abutting on Lam-

* Fleetwood to Vice-Chamberlain, July 12, 1578. State Paper Office.

beth Marsh, lay Paris Garden,* which, like the most woody part of Hyde Park, was studded so thickly with trees that at noonday persons a short way off could scarcely be discerned. Along the river's edge, at some distance out in the water, ran a series of aits or islets densely covered with rushes and tall willows, amid which the noble representative of France carried on an intrigue with a dissolute milk-maid. The same nobleman frequented the neighbourhood of the aits for far worse purposes: where all is now bustle, steam, smoke, and mud, the broad waters then ran peacefully on a summer's night, seldom disturbed by the dip of an oar, or the sound of voices from the banks, save when, in obedience to the law against night-walkers, the formidable watch with halberd and lantern scoured the lanes and patches of greensward lying between the city and the marsh. On the northern bank of the river, the spacious and massive dwellings of the nobility threw their shadows over the water, to which their inmates descended by long dark stairs, at the foot of which light wherries and stately barges generally lay ready for use.

In the warm nights of July, 1578, Paris Gardens † became the focus of a mysterious conspiracy, carried on by the French minister, Sir William Morgan, and Sir Warham St Leger: at a late hour each of these individuals, setting out from the stairs of tavern or private residence, crossed the river, and shooting in behind the aits as behind a barrier reef, landed unperceived. When they reached what was aptly enough called "the bower of conspiracy,"‡ serving men with drawn rapiers were posted at the mouths of the lanes opening into the garden for the defence of their masters in case of extremity.

While they were engaged in deliberation, the watch,

* Fleetwood to Vice-Chamberlain, July 12, 1578. State Paper Office.

† In 1570, Leslie Bishop of Ross had carried on, in the same place, his treasonable intrigues with the Earl of Southampton. Burghley, 'Notes on Elizabeth's Reign,' June 7th, 1570; Lodge, i. 471.

‡ Fleetwood, ubi supra.

headed by Brightman, one of the lord-keeper's men, who as the plotters found was no Dogberry, came up and ordered them to disperse. To this the two knights made a civil reply: but the ambassador, blustering in King Cambyses vein, said he was a privileged person, and refused obedience; till the watch, observing that he and his men were breaking the law against night-walkers, threatened, unless he instantly departed, to seize and carry him over by force to the Recorder's house in the City.

The Morgan here grouped with St Leger, was probably brother to that Thomas Morgan who, while watching over Mary Stuart's interests in Paris, was seized and confined in the Bastile.

An order now came from Burleigh to the Recorder, directing him to send St Leger to the Court, then at Havering. Fleetwood, however, was no match for the gallant knight, for while he was thundering at the gates of Chandos Place,* sculling up and down to reconnoitre it from the Thames, or plunging into the darkness of Paris Garden, St Leger quietly dropped down the river in a boat, and was beyond reach; having before his departure excused himself by letter to the council, whom he coolly informed of his inability to obey its orders, because his horses were at grass. From this date Warham remains out of sight, till we find him with Raleigh in Ireland, doing justice in Elizabeth's behalf on John of Desmond at Cork.

In the portion of Raleigh's career at which we are now arrived, it will be necessary to reject several long-received anecdotes and suppositions which are at variance with fact, and to introduce upon the scene some new personages, who played a part hitherto unsuspected in the Raleigh drama. Naunton and Lloyd, with nearly all subsequent biographers, have had recourse to circumstances purely apocryphal to account for Raleigh's introduction at Court. They fancy that, on his return from Ireland, he was cited before the

* Fleetwood to Burleigh, July 12, 1578. State Paper Office.

council to answer certain charges preferred against him by the Lord-deputy Grey in person. Naunton, one of the basest of Raleigh's traducers, affirms, as of his own knowledge, that though Grey had justice on his side, Raleigh's eloquence not only prevailed with the council, but likewise "Won the Queen's ear in a trice."* Lloyd, an inveterate pedant, amuses his readers with a critical estimate of Raleigh's oration, which he describes after the manner of the "old man eloquent."

The whole of this tissue of ingenuity is a fiction, Raleigh stood in need of no such machinery for making his abilities known to Elizabeth or the chief persons about her. One of the most curious incidents in the life of Leicester is this: being desirous of ascertaining the chances of becoming the Queen's husband, he commissioned one of her women to seize adroitly on some soft and happy moment, to make the most of his merits and press his suit. Elizabeth, after her usual shrewd manner, affected to be angry, saying that since she had refused the greatest princes in Europe, it was not likely she should marry one of her own subjects. As Leicester's fears at the moment glanced at one of those great princes—the Duc d'Anjou—Elizabeth's indignant reply contained all the information he needed.

It is not, however, to this part of the subject that I wish to direct the reader's attention, but to the fact that the lady intrusted with so delicate a mission by Leicester was Raleigh's aunt, the friend and confidant of Elizabeth's girlhood, Mrs Catherine Ashley,† who had some years before presented Raleigh's half-brother, Gilbert, to the Queen.‡

Again, the comptroller of her household, Lord Hunsdon, was Raleigh's near relative; so likewise was Herbert,§ Earl

* Fragmenta Regalia.

† While Elizabeth lived with the Queen-Dowager and Lord Seymour Mrs Ashley was her bedfellow, and seems to have taken what care she could of her morals, which then ran much risk. Haynes, 'Burghley Papers,' 99.

‡ Hooker, 'Supply to the Irish Chronicle,' Holingshed, vi. 367.

§ Walsingham to Sir Edward Stradling, 'Stradling Papers.' See also Raleigh's Letters on the same subject, pp. 22, 23.

of Pembroke, the husband of Mary, Sir Philip Sidney's sister: in the same relationship stood Lord Charles Howard of Effingham,* with many other noblemen and gentlemen, holding places of trust about the Queen's person, as we shall hereafter find her pointing out to Lord Grey in her own peremptory manner.

It will therefore excite no surprise to learn that Raleigh lived on terms of intimacy with the principal personages in England; but among his associates at this time there was one individual respecting whom it is necessary to enter into some details, since he exercised almost from the outset upon Raleigh's fortunes an influence scarcely less sinister than that of Essex; this was Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford,† a man of genius and a poet, but of manners so dissolute, and character so flagitious, that he may for his crimes and vices be looked upon as one of the prodigies of his age.‡

His father John dying while he was yet a minor, the wardship of his person and estates were given by Elizabeth to Burleigh. On the grasping ambition of this minister nothing need be said: he was a new man, who aimed steadily through life at interweaving the fortunes of his family with those of the noblest and most opulent houses in the land. Homer attributes to the great Grecian seer a knowledge of the past, the present, and the future: in the first and second, Burleigh was probably his equal; but to the future he was unfortunately as blind as the Duke of Norfolk's fool. When the wardship, therefore, of the young de Vere fell into his hands, his fancy was evidently kindled by the lucky chance of matching his daughter Anne with a scion of one of the most ancient houses in England, whose princely lordships

* Dedication to 'Discovery of Guiana.'

† Puttenham (Hazelwood ed.), p. 49.

‡ 'True Declaration by Charles Arundel,' 1581, without date of month. Some abatement may be made from the virulence of this man's accusations; though his opinion of de Vere differs very little from that of many other contemporaries.

and manors lay profusely scattered over the southern portions of the realm, from the Land's End to the banks of the Ribble.

Not long after Oxford's marriage with Lady Anne Cecil, reckless intrigue brought his friend and kinsman, the Duke of Norfolk, within swing of the headsman's axe. De Vere's alliance with Burleigh then seemed likely to stand him in good stead. Joining his own entreaties to those of his wife, he earnestly sought to preserve Norfolk from the block. Nothing, however, could turn aside Elizabeth's indignation; —the Duke suffered; and to account for the monstrous life afterwards led by Oxford, he is said on that occasion to have vowed the ruin of his wife and children, in order, through their agonies, to wound and torture his father-in-law.* His first step was to thrust away Lady Oxford from his bed and house, with a miserably parsimonious allowance; after which, to render his desertion more complete, he obtained the Queen's permission to travel. His professed religion at that time must have been Catholicism, otherwise he could not even pretend to have received from the Duke of Alva the post of lieutenant-general to the Spanish forces in the Netherlands.†

Dislodged from this position by the Queen's order, he returned to England; but, after a brief stay, again repaired to the Continent, crossed the Alps, and in the quarrels of Genoa commanded, as he affirmed, a body of thirty thousand men, sent northwards by the Pope to put a period to the Civil Wars. Having distinguished himself by his prudence and sagacity at Genoa, this ancestor of the renowned Captain Lemuel Gulliver proceeded to Venice, by whose priests and

* Lodge, ii. 17.

† Arundel's words are :—"At his being in Flanders, the Duke of Alva, as he will constantly affirm, grew so much to affect him for those rare parts he saw in him as he made him his lieutenant-general over all the army then in the Low Country." 'Brief Declaration.' State Paper Office. The French ambassador in Spain affirms that Philip hated Alva because, by mismanagement, he caused the loss of Flanders. Raumer, i. 198.

courtesans he appears to have been equally fascinated. The exact date of his return is of no moment: he was in London when Raleigh and Gilbert came back from their unsuccessful expedition against the West Indies, after which the former, losing sight for a while of colonial projects, devoted himself to the diversions and excitements of social life. But in times of peril even these are perilous. The two religions which combated each other with sword and pike on the Continent and in Ireland, and longed to use the same weapons in England, were for the present forced to content themselves with the weapons of logic, good or bad, whenever two or three were gathered together at the social board.

Elizabeth, large as was her heart, could not take into favour all the noblemen of England at once; yet those who were refused a share in her lavish love converted their exclusion into a ground of hostility. Raleigh already enjoyed the friendship of Leicester, and was for that reason obnoxious to the Earl of Oxford, whose graceful person, gorgeous apparel, and proficiency in the fatal art of dancing, inspired him with the ambition to supplant Leicester and Hatton in the Queen's regards. Raleigh himself, whose bronzed countenance, martial bearing, and haughty demeanour had not yet attracted the Tudor's notice, though he may have thrown "his brave silken cloak"* upon a narrow splash, to enable her delicate feet to traverse it without a soil, had won nothing beyond a passing smile, and probably neither expected nor desired to win more. He was only generally interested therefore in the dangerous topics discussed habitually in the circles he frequented—in Fish Street, Fleet Street, at Northumberland House, and at the Earl of Oxford's mansion in Broad Street or Westminster.†

It is well known that throughout Elizabeth's reign no

* Nichols, 'Progresses,' i. 469.

† Interrogatories to be demanded of Charles Arundel, 1581. State Paper Office.

topic excited in people or nobles so keen an interest as the question of her marriage, with which that of the succession was indissolubly bound up. One heir-apparent she held with a firm grasp in durance at Tutbury with a fixed determination not to let go her hold: another heir-apparent, in the perfume of her budding charms,* breathed, far beyond Elizabeth's reach, the soft air of Granada, amid pomegranate and citron groves, under the eye of a gloomy but fond father: a third, now thirteen years of age, flitted about the northern frontier of England, surrounded by ministers, some of whom were ready to sacrifice him to Elizabeth, while others saw their own advantage in keeping alive and putting forward his claims in all practicable ways.

Accordingly, when the de Veres, the Percies, the Arundels, and the Howards, brought together their friends to eat venison, and drain bowls of sack, topics bordering closely upon treason were often introduced: it was, for example, whispered among them that "the King of Scots began now to put on spurs to his heels, and as soon as the matter of Monsieur were assured to be at an end, that then, within six months, we should see the Queen's Majesty to be the most troubled and discontented person living."†

One chief point aimed at by de Vere was the overthrow of Leicester, whose place he panted to occupy in the Queen's favour. To compass this end, wild and various were the plans he organized, sometimes seeking to awaken Elizabeth's fears, sometimes to pique her vanity, sometimes to stimulate her indignation, by enumerating Leicester's crimes. Suspecting that these schemes might fail, Oxford had recourse to other contrivances.

At the period of which we are speaking, he possessed two mysterious and dangerous books, one called 'The Book

* The visitor to the Museo at Madrid will probably admire the portrait of this princess, Isabella Clara Eugenia, by Cuelo, which may be regarded as one of the ornaments of the Gallery.

† Interrogatories. MSS., State Paper Office.

of Babies,' the other, 'The Book of Prophecies.' In the former the author had probably collected all the rumours then circulated throughout the realm, of Elizabeth's offspring by Leicester. The general belief appears to have been that, when the Queen found herself enciente, she left London and went on a progress into the country, where secretly, in some remote castle, she gave birth to her child, which was spirited away, and brought up carefully under the eyes of Leicester's friends. What credit was to be given to such stories, de Vere, in all likelihood, never considered, but in proportion to his hopes of success with the Queen, or fears of failure, withheld or exhibited the 'Book of Babies,' merely to have seen which was looked upon as akin to treason.

The other mysterious production, 'The Book of Prophecies,' seems to have been of subsequent manufacture. The history of its origin is extravagantly wild: by the aid of a priest, he was enabled to enter into amiable relations with the devil, under whose directions he made a series of paintings, explanatory of future events. These, when finished, he bound together in a volume, and called 'The Book of Prophecies.' The process of raising his sable majesty, which appears to have been conducted in due form, took place in a little house in the Tilt-yard at Greenwich. Of this sort of "skimble scamble" stuff Oxford's conversation appears to have commonly consisted. The chief aim of his intercourse with Raleigh seems to have been to detach him from Leicester, towards whom, as well as towards his friends and kindred, he cherished a mortal hatred.

In September, 1579, this feeling at length exhibited itself in acts of violence: going into the Tennis Court, he found there Leicester's kinsman, Philip Sidney, and immediately conceived the plan of insulting the uncle through the nephew. Sidney, at the time, was engaged in playing, while the French commissioners, then waiting for an audience of her Majesty, were watching him from a gallery

which overlooked the Tennis Court. This fact may have been an additional inducement to de Vere to persist in the insult he meditated. Going up to Sidney, he ordered him to retire, as he himself wished to play. Philip, prouder of being a Dudley than a Sidney, replied as became a Dudley, upon which de Vere called him a puppy. Unable to curb his anger, Philip, upon this, gave him the lie, and touching the hilt of his sword by way of intimating his intention, walked out of the Tennis Court, and not doubting that the Earl would follow him, waited outside. The Earl, however, continued his play, without deigning to take any further notice of his adversary.

This story is told throughout with variations, it being sometimes stated that Sidney immediately sent a challenge to the Earl; but, as we find from Charles Arundel's papers, preserved in the Record Office, it was the Earl himself who sent the challenge. "He employed Raleigh and myself with a message to this effect, that the question might be honourably ended; Mr Sidney accepted gladly thereof, and desired much it might not be deferred; which, when he heard, never meaning anything less, as after it appeared, told us plainly he was not to hazard himself, having received such an injury, and therefore he had another course, and that was to have him murdered in his lodgings; the manner how he would have done it, and what words I gave him, and how I withstood it, let my Lord Harry, who dealt very honourably, and Raleigh, as honestly, report."*

Up to this time Raleigh appears to have stood high in de Vere's estimation, for he not only shared with him his venison and sack, but whispered into his ear his most important secrets; one of which was that Monsieur laboured to allure him into France by magnificent promises. Gradually, however, an ill-feeling crept into their intercourse. Not falling readily into de Vere's plans for making away secretly with

* Aubrey, probably without foundation, says Raleigh was Oxford's second in some duel, ii. 511.

a number of their friends and intimates, Raleigh incurred his resentment, which ultimately deepened into deadly hatred. Reflecting, probably, that the young soldier would carry with him too many of his secrets to Ireland, Oxford took measures for cutting him off while he was within reach; but whether the projected instrument was to have been the dagger or the bowl, the design proved abortive.

Several of the accusations brought against de Vere are so monstrous that I should hesitate to extend the least credit to them, were it not that he did certainly, on many occasions, act and speak after a fashion which justified his acquaintances in regarding him as a consummate villain, or a madman. Hatred of Leicester appears to have been his ruling passion. The hero of 'Father Parson's Romance' had no doubt his foibles, or whatever else we may choose to call them: men died after supping with him; if he fell in love with a beautiful married woman, her husband soon after was carried off by a fever, and she became his own; Italian physicians, adepts in manufacturing their country's physic, found an asylum in his house, from which they were believed to send forth among the Earl's antagonists and enemies shafts tipped with sudden death; but if behind this tissue of popular persuasions any truth really lay hidden, the fact not only defied the scrutiny of contemporaries, but has continued to defy the researches of historians for three hundred years. To those around him, from the Queen to the scullion, Leicester was all suavity and polish: extravagant in his magnificence, ambitious of honours, insatiable of opulence; but in his intercourse with all classes, easy, pleasant, measured in his language, inspiring confidence, and often commanding unswerving attachment. No wonder, therefore, that he appeared to be the foremost man of his time, highest in the Queen's favour, most potent in the government, disposing of places and offices almost like a king, which he was only prevented from becoming by a few false steps or untoward accidents.

To be the rival of such a man de Vere was no way

qualified; he inwardly, moreover, felt his inferiority, and was keenly stung by the consciousness. Knowing, however, that steel or aquetta would, if skilfully used, rid him of this perpetual eyesore, he is said to have aimed in various ways at accomplishing his purpose. But Leicester had contrived to surround himself with a multitude of friends and adherents, not one of whom could, for the time at least, be tempted to touch his life. De Vere, we are assured, tried many of them—Cheke, Arthur Gorges, Raleigh—but failing in his manœuvres, sought to imitate in a clumsy manner what he believed to be the policy of his enemy. No credible account ever represented Leicester babbling over his cups of the assassinations he meditated; if he took off men it was in a way which appeared to make nature his instrument, or at least his accomplice; but the murders de Vere intended to perpetrate he talked of openly, boasting of the means at his disposal, his barges on the river, his store of powder and shot, his calivers, his disciplined assassins ever ready to use them.

This noisy method of going about his work enabled friends to put his intended victims on their guard. John Cheke and Arthur Gorges were to have been shot while returning to their lodgings across Richmond Green; Sidney was to have been stilettoed in his bed, Leicester as he descended his garden stairs, Raleigh in some way not specified. Threatened men, however, according to the old proverb, live long, at least in some cases. Nine years later, Leicester is believed to have had ratsbane put into his porridge at Cornbury; and Sidney, two years earlier, fell in the field; but honest John Cheke, the friend of Leicester's friend, Lord Grey, in little more than twelve months from the utterance of de Vere's menace, was picked off by a ball, either native or foreign, in the trenches before del Oro. Whether de Vere had the satisfaction of causing his death or not, Cheke is said to have formed one of the triumvirate whom that noble person destined to secret extinction.

We have seen above that Sidney was among the princi-

pal objects of de Vere's hatred. Why he was so is obvious; he was Leicester's nephew, and as such, strongly opposed to the French faction at Court, which was headed by de Vere. Leicester had lost at this time much of his influence over the Queen, by the discovery of his marriage with Lettice Knollys; but the old fire still smouldered in her heart, so that little would be required to fan it again into a flame. Philip Sidney, who, though young, had acquired a reputation for prudence, as well as for proficiency in the art of writing, was commissioned to draw up an appeal to Elizabeth's feelings, failings, judgment, and religion, in opposition to the French match. He is supposed to have been urged to take the step by his father and Walsingham;* but it may be safely assumed that his chief instigator was Leicester, who in all likelihood inspired, if he did not draw up, the famous letter addressed by Sidney to the Queen, in the interval between New Year's Day and the date of Raleigh's departure for Ireland. Terrible results were expected to spring from this audacious missive, though, as Elizabeth doubtless knew in whose interest it was written and who had prompted it, she limited her resentment to mere outward show, inwardly gratified all the while by so strong a proof of Leicester's jealousy and love. Sidney, however, deemed it politic to retire into the country, while his friend Raleigh directed his footsteps elsewhere.

* Fox Bourne, 'Life of Sidney,' p. 252.

CHAPTER IV.

PERPETRATES THE MASSACRE OF DEL ORO.

The military preparations of Philip gave birth to alarm in many parts of Europe, because none could foresee what country was to be the object of attack. Gradually the conviction gained strength that Spain intended to direct her armaments against Elizabeth's dominions, which, in spite of treaties, were from time to time invaded by bodies of Spanish and Italian adventurers, who, according to their success or failure, might be acknowledged or disowned. It was rightly judged that England could be most effectually weakened through Ireland; and accordingly the policy adopted by the Pope and the King of Spain was to excite rebellion in that part of the realm, in order to distract the attention and waste the resources of the English Government. In 1578 the Irish rebels were promised the aid of a considerable force; but armies on paper have always been more numerous than those on the muster-ground. When, therefore, the Irish Jesuit Allen, Dr Sanders, whom Lord Oxford would have seated on the papal chair, and the Earl of Desmond's cousin, James Fitzmaurice, sailed for Ireland, their followers scarcely exceeded seven hundred men.* With these, however, they doubled the southern headlands of the island, and pushing out into the open sea, beheld rising up, in rugged grandeur before them, the loftiest

* See Raleigh, 'History of the World,' vi. 23, where he suggests a parallel between the Spaniards and the Mamertines.

mountains in Ireland, separated from each other by lovely well-wooded valleys, and holding in their craggy embrace the Killarney Lakes, with a multitude of coombes and dingles. James Fitzmaurice, familiar with his cousin's domains, selected Smerwick* for the point of disembarkation, where, close to the shore, the invaders hastily threw up a fort, on which they bestowed the name of del Oro. To protect their crude works from heretical bullets, the doctors consecrated them in due form, though this did not prevent their falling into decay, and having to be rebuilt in little more than a year.

While the Catholics were busy at this out-of-the-way intrenchment, erecting or repairing ramparts, quarrelling, plotting, swearing, or saying mass, Captain Raleigh, with a company of a hundred men, his would-be assassin de Vere's agent among the rest, dropped down the Thames, January 24th, 1580, and proceeded to the Isle of Wight. After a fortnight's detention by contrary winds he again put to sea, and reached Cork on the 22nd of February. Immediately on landing he found himself in the midst of those obstructions and difficulties which seem to be the natural growth of the Irish soil. His men wanting pay, he made application to the Irish functionaries, who informed him that he and his troopers could only be considered under their jurisdiction from the day of their landing, and referred him for all arrears to the Home Government.

He at once therefore addressed a letter to his patron Leicester, describing his position, and complaining that he had been forced to satisfy out of his own private funds the demands of the soldiers. To his request that the money thus become due should be paid with all convenient speed to his agent, who was to deliver the letter to the Earl, I know not what answer was vouchsafed; but in all likelihood both he and they, like the rest of the army, depended thenceforward very much upon chance for the means of keeping soul and body together.

* Contracted from St Mary-wick. Camden, 'Britannia,' 977.

The field of war, on which for the next two years Raleigh was to be employed, resembled few others in the Christian world. Society in Ireland had scarcely advanced beyond the stage described by Hesiod:* little agriculture existed, though Shane O'Neil had a few years before exerted his influence for its encouragement; the country was governed by innumerable chiefs, nearly always engaged in mutual hostilities. The galloglass mounted on his small but bony and indefatigable horse, with battleaxe, generally bloody, on his shoulder; the kern, light, fleet, remorseless, muffled in his cloak,† armed with skene or rapier, with conscience at the command of his officer or priest, scoured the country singly or in bands, firing the habitations of the English, killing their cattle, ripping up their women, and perpetrating every other atrocity which national hate could inspire. On the other hand, the English soldiers revenged crime with crime; their acts fully equalling those of the kern and galloglass in recklessness and ferocity.

Still to Raleigh there was nothing new in all this: from the age of seventeen he had been habituated to the worst excesses of military license; for in the history of the world there is not a blacker page than that which describes the religious struggles in France.

Until the English ministers should appoint a new Lord-deputy, with full power to deal with the rebellion, Sir William Pelham,‡ who owed his elevation to the Council of Ireland, exercised supreme command. Neither as a statesman, however, nor as a general, was he qualified to cope with the difficulties of his situation. Nearly the whole island was in a state of insurrection: priests going from castle to castle, from cabin to cabin, stimulated noble and peasant to take up arms for the Church; mountains, bogs, woods, valleys, swarmed with the fanatical acolytes of Rome; the Geraldines were at the head of large forces, while the

* Mr Hans Hamilton, 'Preface to Irish Calendar,' p. 3.
† Spenser, 'View of the State of Ireland.'
‡ Hooker, p. 434.

Spaniards and Italians, making incessant forays from del Oro and other fortresses, helped to enlarge the circle of murder and devastation.

From February till June, 1580, neither chronicle nor calendar makes reference to Raleigh; but in that sunny month he presents himself engaged in no very enviable employment,* though characteristic enough of the times. James, brother to the Earl of Desmond, venturing with reckless daring into the neighbourhood of Cork, to enjoy the congenial pastime of ravaging the lands of his personal enemy, Cormac Mac Teigh, sheriff of that city, a fight ensued, during which James had the ill-luck to be made prisoner by a smith, who manacled and concealed him among thickets till the contest was over. The sheriff then obtaining possession of the prisoner, conveyed intelligence of his capture to the Lord Justice, who ordered him to be put on his trial at Cork.

At this stage of the proceedings, the Geraldine was handed over to Sir Warham St Leger and Captain Raleigh; by whom, after he had been indicted, condemned, and sentenced, he was hanged, drawn, and quartered; and, in conformity with the barbarism of the times, the fragments of his wretched body were gibbeted on the city walls, to be devoured by kites and ravens.

Perplexed by the affairs of Ireland—which in fact have been always perplexing—Elizabeth's ministers now sought by a change of men to remedy the inherent defects of their system. Wherever Catholicism exists in its natural state, good government is impossible: sacerdotal celibacy, the confessional, and spiritual subordination to a foreign potentate being only compatible with despotism.

To dissolve the spell of Romish influence, and bring back the Irish to their allegiance, Burleigh and Walsingham could think of nothing better than to send over, as Deputy, Leicester's friend, Lord Arthur Grey, of Wilton, a ruthless

* Hooker, p. 423.

Puritan,* the sternness of whose character had been exasperated by a military education. It may seem strange that a nobleman of such a temper should have chosen for his secretary Edmund Spenser, a poet whose genius seems to have had little bias for war; but his friend Raleigh was a Leicestrian, his other friend Philip Sidney was half a Dudley, so that it is not surprising that, being desirous of advancing his fortunes, they should have recommended him to Grey, who went over to reduce the favourite's principles to practice.

With the Lord-deputy's doings generally I have no concern. He reached Dublin on the 12th of August, and on the 7th of September, Elizabeth's birthday, Sir William Pelham relinquished into his hands the sword of office. Impatient to extirpate the enemies of his sovereign, Grey soon afterwards left Dublin, and marched westwards at the head of eight hundred men, horse and foot, under the command of Captains Raleigh, Zouch, Denny, and Macworth. At Rakele, Grey was met by the Earl of Ormond, who came thither to relinquish his credentials as Governor of Munster.

All Ireland within the pale was now in a state of alarm, all without the pale in high exultation, for on the 14th of September a fresh force of six or seven hundred Spaniards and Italians had disembarked near the Dingle, where they repaired and took possession of the fort del Oro. The foreign commanders having opened a communication with the insurgents, concerted with them the plan of a general rebellion, while Desmond and his followers hung in flying columns over the heights of Munster, to reconnoitre the movements of the English general, to divert his supplies, and, if fortune favoured, by forming a junction with the foreigners, to surround and cut him off.

Grey's forces were certainly few to cope with such swarms of insurgents, supported by a formidable body of disciplined Spaniards, and the inveterate hostility of the whole country,

* Birch, 'Memoirs of Elizabeth,' i. 4.

where rebellion had to be trampled out at every step. Nevertheless, the fierce Puritan, knowing neither fear nor fatigue, advanced rapidly towards Smerwick Bay, where, in conformity with the orders of the British Government, a naval force under the command of Admiral Winter was to aid him in his operations, and furnish his army with supplies.

When Grey broke up his camp at Rakele, Raleigh, ever bent upon action, remained behind with his company, which he posted in ambush about the field. Scarcely had the lances and glittering helmets of the English disappeared among the rocks and hollows ere a troop of "rough rug-headed" kerns, who from the surrounding woods had been reconnoitring our army, rushed into the deserted camp to collect such articles as should be left behind, and slaughter any loiterers they might fall in with. While they were busily engaged in ransacking the tents, Raleigh's men surrounded and captured them. Among the gang was one fellow laden with withe halters: "To what end did you bring these with you?" inquired Raleigh. Intrepid as his interrogator, the kern replied, "To hang up any English churl I might get hold of."—"Good," answered Raleigh; "but as the case stands, they will serve just as well to hang up an Irish kern:" and forthwith ordered the daring Celt, whose courage should have saved him, to be suspended from the next tree. The rest of the prisoners, having been taken to the Lord-deputy's head-quarters, were dealt with according to their supposed deserts.

It was now October. Autumn, usually mild in Ireland, had prematurely given place to winter; stormy winds, accompanied by a deluge of rain, set in from the Atlantic; on bog, morass, and fen, in ravine and dingle, the floods were out, every rill became a brook, every brook a torrent. The English soldiers, deficient in all things but arms and courage, marched through mire almost to the knee, upheld by the example of their general, who, subordinating everything

to a sense of duty, pressed forward eagerly towards the enemy, and at length, on the 2nd of November, pitched his camp within eight miles of del Oro.*

Urged by his impatience, Grey had outrun the movements of Winter's fleet, as well as of the transports, on the arrival of which his troops depended for provisions. Though so near the foe, with whom he longed to grapple, he could therefore do nothing but cast wistful looks at the sea, in the hope of discerning the English flag in the offing. Reviewing hastily his own position, he says, "Now, when almost in despair, news came to me, first, that three bands, which I had appointed to follow me, were coming at hand. I was leaping to horse to meet them, when another messenger in great haste brought word that Sir William Winter, with the ships, was at the Ventry, and would next morning, if the wind held, be at Smerwick." Next day, the admiral's flag-ship, followed by the rest of the fleet, floated into the bay, and the Lord-deputy rode down to the shore to hold conference with Winter. The plan of attack was then agreed upon. Winter was to disembark several great guns, which, under cover of darkness, the sailors were to drag up the heights, and plant in a position commanding the fort, upon which they were to play as soon as the general should be in readiness to assault it from the other side.

Though now, at the distance of three hundred years, the events then taking place on Smerwick Bay may appear insignificant, they were looked upon in a very different light then. The Spanish force in del Oro, small as it was, constituted, in public estimation, the vanguard of the greatest military force then existing in the world, which, for aught that was known in England or Ireland, might at any moment heave in sight on the decks of an armada generally deemed invincible. To judge fairly, therefore, of Grey's proceedings, we must remember that he acted with this fact

* Grey to Elizabeth, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

constantly before his mind's eye. The enemy intrenched on Elizabeth's territories regarded her and the majority of her subjects as persons possessing no claim to Christian forbearance, to exterminate whom would be an act of piety. For individuals cherishing such convictions, Grey, whose charity rested on a basis quite as narrow as theirs, experienced nothing but supreme scorn mingled with detestation, so that he panted with eagerness to put them to the sword.

All necessary preparations made, he accordingly struck his camp, and advancing upon the fort, pitched it again by the dingle. Raleigh, it must not be forgotten, was in this camp, forming one of Lord Grey's council, riding forth among the other officers who formed his staff, and acquainted with the temper of the general's mind, looking forward probably to the horrors in which the operations of the siege culminated.

Next day, about noon, Grey, surrounded by his officers, rode towards the fort. "The Spaniards discharged a great piece at a troop of horsemen attending his honour, at which time the master of the horse very narrowly escaped, and the vanguard marching after my lord with a small company, drew near within danger of shot." How far Grey exhibited prudence on this occasion may be matter of question. The Spaniards in the fort, mindful of their old chivalrous customs, and desirous of impressing the English with a high idea of their valour, sent forth from their gates a small body of infantry to skirmish with our general's escort, while their heavy ordnance discharged showers of round shot, and numerous musketeers, from trenches resembling our rifle-pits, made active use of their small-arms. By way of retaliation, Winter, who had now brought up his ships within range, opened fire upon the fort, and thus the affair of del Oro commenced.

Grey with his retinue riding up to within a hundred and twenty paces of the rampart, the besieged discharged at them six hundred shot, but without hurting him or any

of his followers.* Ammunition, with tools for the sappers and miners, having been landed from the fleet, and several great guns planted in position upon the heights, Grey moved his camp from the dingle and pitched within falcon-shot of del Oro. At night, a number† of sailors supplied by Winter laboured at the trenches; two culverins were pushed on to within three hundred paces of the fort, and by two o'clock next day all the guns of the besieged were dismounted. Once and again, while the works were in progress, Grey summoned the foreigners to surrender; but they had not yet lost heart, and fired his Puritan blood by replying that they were there by command of the Pope, who had taken Ireland from his heretical mistress, and given it to the King of Spain, adding, that what they held they would keep, and gain what they could. After this nothing remained but to keep the batteries in full play, which soon brought the invaders to alter the style of their language. All readers of Milton will remember his apostrophe to the soul of Sir John Cheke, who, besides teaching Cambridge and King Edward Greek, had become father to a brave son. This young man was one of those that were to have been picked off on Richmond Green by de Vere's assassins,‡ who we are assured followed him and Raleigh to Ireland, and, either by one of them or by the Spaniards, was now shot in the head, and fell mortally wounded at the general's feet.

Without entering further into a detail of operations, I will hurry on to the catastrophe, which, however shocking or bloody, was not, as has been asserted, without a parallel in the acts of Englishmen. Some have pretended that the Lord-deputy acted on this occasion under restraint, his own more merciful views, which he urged with tears, being over-

* Anonymous to Walsingham, November 11th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

† Grey to Elizabeth, November 12th; Vice-admiral Bingham to Walsingham, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers,' State Paper Office.

‡ Charles Arundel, in his Brief Declaration, accuses the Earl of Oxford of projecting the murder of Cheke, October, 1581. State Paper Office.

borne by the paramount authority of the Council. From the character of the man, stern and implacable, we might, without positive testimony, have rejected such a version of the story; but there is no need of inference or conjecture. Grey is the historian of his own deed, and, instead of flinching from responsibility to man or God, describes what took place in exulting terms, challenging the approval of his contemporaries, and of posterity. If any narrative of barbarity or guilt possess an undying interest this does: what took place was not the fierce ebullition of some obscure soldier, it was the deliberate act of a nobleman, representing Elizabeth's person and policy in Ireland, and standing on the highest vantage-ground of English civilization, with the great historian of the world among his advisers, and the author of the 'Fairy Queen' by his side. Observe, then, with what imperturbable complacency, and with what undoubting conviction of approval, he relates to his queen the dark event which has met with so much condemnation from subsequent ages.

"I stayed," he says, "in the trench, and finding their shot more loosely to beat at us, and that ours did little or nothing annoy them, for we did not discern either by spikehole or smoke on the rampire where they lay, I endeavoured, as I might, to watch their next volley, and happily did it seem to come from under a certain building of timber, that at the point of the curtain was set up, propped outwardly like a hovel and inwardly standing like a penthouse. I went straight to the barricadoes, and willed the gunners to point their pieces at that place; Sir William Winter made that shot at two tiers, our gentlemen were displaced and the trench at great . . . . and by that two other tiers were given, in great haste leaps one of them to the top of their vantmure with an ensign of a sheet, and craves a parley. Hereof straight was word sent me by John Zouch, who then had the ward, and I willed him and the trench-master, one Captain Piers, a very sufficient and industrious man, to know what they

would. It was returned to me that their colonel would send one out to treat with me in case his messenger might safely go and return : upon advice, it was granted. There was presently sent unto me one Alexandro, their camp-master. He told me that certain Spaniards and Italians were there arrived upon fair speeches, which altogether vain and false they found, and that it was no part of their interest to molest or take any government from your Majesty ; for proof they were ready to depart as they came, and deliver into my hands their fort. Mine answer was, for that I perceived that their people to stand of two nations, Italian and Spanish, I would give no answer unless a Spaniard were likewise by. He presently went, and returned with a Spanish captain. I then told their captain that I knew their nation to have an absolute prince, one that was in good league and amity with your Majesty, which made me to marvel that any of his people should be found associated with them that went about to maintain rebels against you, and to disturb any your Highness's governments, and taking that it could not be his king's will, I was to know by whom and for what cause they were sent. His reply was, that the king had not sent them, but one Don Martines de Ricaldi, governor for the king at Bilboa, had willed him to levy a band, and to repair with it to Santander, and there to be directed by their colonel here, whom he followed as a blind man, not knowing whither. The other avouched that they were all sent by the Pope for the defence of the Catholic faith. My answer was, that I would not greatly have marvelled if men, commanded by natural and absolute princes, did sometimes take in hand wrong actions ; but that men of account, as some of them made show of being, should be carried into unjust, wicked, and desperate actions, by one that neither from God nor man could claim any princely power or empire, but indeed a detestable shaveling of the Antichrist and general ambitious tyrant over all principalities, and patron of the diabolical faith, I could not but greatly wonder. Their

fault, therefore, appeared to be aggravated by the vileness of their commander, and that at my hands no conditions of composition they were to expect other than that they should simply render me the fort, and yield themselves to my will for life or death.

"With this answer he departed; after which there was one or two courses to and fro more, to have gotten a certainty for some of their lives; but finding that it would not be, the colonel himself, about sun-setting, came forth requesting respite with surcease of arms till the next morning, and then he would give me a resolute answer. Finding that to be but a gain of time for them, and loss of the same for myself, I definitively answered, I could not grant it, and therefore presently that he either took my offer or else return, and I would fall to my business. He then embraced my knees, putting himself to my mercy, only he prayed for the night he might abide in the fort, and that in the morning all should be put into my hands. I asked hostages for the performance: they were given. Morning came. I presented my forces in battle before the fort. The colonel came forth with ten or twelve of his chief gentlemen, trailing their ensigns, rolled up, and presented them to me with their lives and the fort." *

"Judex damnatur," it is said, "quum nocens absolvitur," knowing which as well as any man, Camden yet undertakes to apologize for Grey's proceedings at del Oro. First, he affirms that the garrison equalled the English in number, while a body of fifteen hundred Irish rebels was encamped upon the heights near at hand; secondly, that the conquerors being without clothing or provisions, needed the spoils of the fort for their own subsistence; thirdly, he maintains, that Grey discussing beforehand with his officers the perilous situation of affairs, yielded with tears to the arguments by which they demonstrated the necessity of massacring the prisoners; fourthly, the Queen, he goes on

* Grey to the Queen, November 12th, 1580. State Paper Office.

to say, when news of the horrible transaction reached England, wished it had not been done, detesting from her heart such cruelty; yet, he sneakingly adds, "though seemingly necessary." *

All these allegations are false, though both the assistants in the slaughter and they who had afterwards calmly to pronounce judgment on it naturally enough sought to palliate its atrocity. Vice-admiral Bingham, writing from the camp to Walsingham while his nerves were yet quivering from the effects of what he had witnessed, labours to shift off from the general some portion of the odium which he foresees such an act must bring upon the English. So, with the rhetoric of a rough sailor anxious to speak truth, yet averse from censuring his commander, he stammers out as follows his extenuating recital: "They came," he says, "to the point of the rampire which we had beaten with the culverins with a white banner, bare-headed, and requested a parley, which my lord granted, in that they were contented the same night to surrender the place, with their lives, and all that was therein to my lord's will, to have mercy or not mercy as he should think good; yet for that it was night and no time to get them forth, they were, by my lord, repossessed till the morrow, but the best of them taken forth for gages or pledges, and we that notwithstanding followed our trench which we finished the same night within three score paces of the fort, and so ran the same all along their front where we meant to place our battery to which we brought the same night two pieces. On the 10th, early in the morning, my lord sent in divers gentlemen to take order that such munitions of powder and victual should be preserved to her Majesty's use as that was. The order was taken that the

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' 1580. Instead of palliating the crime, the historian would have done better to prove by examples that it was altogether in the spirit of the times. Sir Francis Vere having taken a fort in Flanders, put the whole garrison, consisting of three hundred men, to the sword. 'Sidney Papers,' i. 309. So again when Mons fell into the hands of the French, eight hundred of its defenders were cut to pieces.

colonel, and captains, and chief officers should come forth and deliver up their ensigns, with the order and economy thereto belonging, which done, the band which had the ward of the day within then entered; but in the mean time were entered a number of the mariners upon the part next to the sea, which with the soldiers aforesaid having possessed the place, fell to revelling and spoiling and withal to killing, in which they never ceased while there lived one." *

So far Bingham. Another of those present at the massacre who recked little of the lives of Spaniards or Italians, enters with evident satisfaction into details respecting the variety and amount of the plunder:—"The forts were yielded, and the Irishmen and women hanged, and four hundred and upwards of Italians, Spaniards, Biscayans and others put to the sword. The colonel, captains, secretary, campmaster, and others of the best sort saved, to the number of twenty prisoners, and Dr Sanders' chief man, an Englishman, Plunkett, a friar, and others, kept in store to be executed after examination to be had of them. It is confessed that five hundred more were daily looked for to be sent from the Pope, and the King of Spain to land here. There was found in the forts good store of money and a great quantity of biscuit, bacon, oil, fish, rice, beans, peas, and barley, being by computation victuals for their company for half a year. There was also found armour, morions, calivers, muskets, pikes, swords, barrels of bullets, and other kinds of furniture, to serve three months, and sundry tools for men of all occupations." †

In the narrative written by the general himself, I discover nothing to warrant Camden's statement, no trace of compunction, no allusion to tears, no regret for the hard necessity, which, had he been doubtful of the justice of his

* Bingham to Walsingham, Smerwick, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

† Anonymous to Walsingham, Smerwick, November 11th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

own conduct, he might have pleaded in palliation of the massacre. On the contrary, it is clear that his heart swelled with pride at the recollection of what he had done, the glory of which he was so desirous of monopolizing that he jealously abstained from mentioning the names of the officers, who, by the rules of the service or his express order, went in at the head of the bands charged with the slaughter of the prisoners. These officers, however, as we learn from another authority,* were Captains Raleigh and Macworth, who on that 10th of November perpetrated one of the most appalling atrocities in the history of the Irish wars. Doubtless they acted under orders, and had therefore no choice; yet it is not a pleasant thing to remember that the gallant of Elizabeth's court, the august prisoner of the Bloody Tower, the historian of the world, the martyr of Palace Yard, achieved willingly or unwillingly so detestable an act of cruelty. †

Grey's account of the massacre is as follows: "I sent straightway certain gentlemen to see their weapons and armour laid down, and to guard the munition and victuals that were left from spoil. Then put I in certain bands who straightway fell to execution. There were six hundred slain; munition and victual great store, though much wasted through the disorder of the soldiers, which in their fury could not be helped." The Spaniards and Italians of rank whose lives Grey spared were distributed among his favourite officers, that they might be enriched by the sums to be paid for their ransoms. It does not appear that Raleigh enjoyed any portion of this reward, for he seems to have already incurred the dislike of the general, which subsequent events deepened into rancour. To impress Elizabeth with the policy of conferring such rewards, Grey says: "Though your majesty may, and I doubt not will, have good service

* Hooker, 'Supply to the Irish Chronicle,' Holingshed, vi. 439.

† In his 'History of the World,' Raleigh describes a parallel massacre, though on a much vaster scale, which took place during the Persian invasion of Greece. Works, vi. 33.

done, yet truly for toils and misery sustained in it, through length and hardness of ways, extremity of weather, coldness of season, continual watching and penury of victual, hardly by any soldiers will the like again be performed. Your majesty at this service had here but eight hundred men; they have pulled out of a fort well fortified, better victualled, excellently stored with armour and munition for six hundred men, whereof four hundred were as gallant and goodly personages as any I ever beheld."*

I now come to a still more startling feature of this transaction. Camden, though he wrote under James, who was ever eager to tarnish Elizabeth's fame, yet shrank from confessing to posterity that she had approved of the massacre of del Oro. Such, however, is the fact. Cruelty lurked close beneath the surface of the Tudor blood, so that at the least provocation it leaped into life and prompted to acts of ferocity. Elizabeth moreover was a woman of the sixteenth century, brave and fearless in the midst of danger, but convinced, nevertheless, that over those who obviously sought her position, her crown, her life, the *lex talionis* gave her absolute jurisdiction. She regarded them as men do murderers on the highway whom the law of nature renders it permissible to destroy in self-defence. Besides, the age, I repeat, was a barbarous age, in which nothing was viewed in the light in which we behold it now. These facts I state not to justify Elizabeth but to explain her conduct. Standing at the bar of posterity, she thus enumerates her motives and makes her defence :—

By the Queen, your loving Sovereign,

ELIZABETH R.

TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED,—

As the most happy success you have lately had against certain invaders sent by the Pope, contained in your letters

* Grey to Elizabeth, Smerwick, November 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

brought unto us by our servant Denny, doth incomparably show the greatness of God's love and favour towards us, so your care and pains in following of the same, and courage in executing thereof, deserveth great thanks and commendations wherein you have answered by effects the good opinion we received of your sufficiency at the time of our choice made of you to supply the place you do now hold, not doubting there will appear greater fruits of your valour in reducing the diseased state of the realm to such conformity as God may be better served, we obeyed, and this our realm not burthened with charges as of late years it hath been, wherein assure yourself you shall not lack any good countenance and favour in such measure as neither any . . . . practice shall be able to prevail against, and therefore upon this assurance you may proceed with the more comfort in the charge committed unto you. In this late enterprise performed by you so greatly to our liking, we could have wished that the principal persons of the said invaders to whom you have promised grace, which we will see performed, had been reserved for us to have executed towards them either justice or mercy as to us should have been found best, for so it seemeth to us most agreeable to reason that a principal should receive punishment before an accessary, which would have served for a terror to such as may be hereafter . . . . to be executioners of so wicked an enterprise, when they heard here, that as well the heads as inferiors had received punishment according to their demerits.

Upon the great good report you have given unto us of such captains and soldiers as in this enterprise did assist you, for their great forwardness and courage in performing this so acceptable a service to us, we would have you let them understand in how thankful part we accept the same; and so much the rather for that we have been informed what great penury they have sustained in our service there, not only for want of necessary victual, but also in regard of the

badness and unseasonableness of such scarcity as they had; wherein as we to our great grief, holding nothing so . . . . as the preservation of the health and lives of the soldiers, think ourselves very ill-served by such officers to whom the care thereof hath been committed, so you will let them understand that we will see better order taken hereafter, as well in that as in all things requisite for their better comfort and encouragement, and for the advancement of our service."*

On the top of the above letter, drawn up of course by her ministers, and copied by a secretary, Elizabeth, we are informed by Walsingham, wrote what follows in a fine Roman hand. It is worthy of note that her language, generally vigorous and perspicuous, becomes, when she talks of sentiment or love, so involved and mystical that it is scarcely practicable to follow the course of her ideas. To Grey she says, "The mightiest hand of the Almightiest Power hath showed manifest the force of his strength in the weakness of feeblest hope; and mind this, you live to make men ashamed, ever hereafter to disdain. . . . . In which action I say you have been chosen the lieutenant of His glory with us to give you no cause to——" Abruptly broken off.

* Elizabeth to Grey, December 12th, 1580, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

CHAPTER V.

CLOSE OF HIS IRISH CAMPAIGN.

Untroubled apparently by the least remorse for the terrible part he had played at del Oro, Raleigh returned to his old quarters in Cork, while the Lord-deputy proceeded to Dublin, to make preparations for dealing with the rebels, who in number and daring were growing every day more formidable. Scarcely can a doubt be entertained that, through the instrumentality of the priesthood, Rome and Spain held continual communication with the Irish nobles, whose hopes were kindled by the knowledge imparted to them of Philip's ultimate designs. To fill up the chasm between the present and the future it was their policy to skirmish with events, to pursue a dubious course by professing loyalty while secretly stimulating rebellion, and, by multiplying the scenes of action, to necessitate the dispersion and consequently the weakening of the English forces. The task of checking these movements had devolved on Ormond, who had been reinstated in the unenviable position of general and governor in Munster. Under his command Raleigh served, though his military genius and political sagacity, aided by experience, led him to form a low estimate of the earl's abilities.

With the germs of numerous plans in his mind, Raleigh, in the dead of winter, set out for Dublin, in the hope of prevailing on the Lord-deputy to adopt his scheme for trampling out the insurrection, while persevering in that course of rigid economy insisted on by Elizabeth and her ministers.

Though he had already begun to be viewed in an unfavourable light by Grey, he obtained an audience, and was permitted to set forth his ideas. The result showed one of two things: first, that the Lord-deputy laid no great stress on his suggestions; or, secondly, that he was led through petty jealousy to deny him the means of developing them on a scale which would command the attention of the Home Government. Accordingly he sent back the energetic young officer with a large field of duty mapped out for him, but a very small increase of means for filling it up. Raleigh was instructed by the Lord-deputy to watch over the movements of the Barries, to seize on Barry Court and its demesnes, and to adopt such other measures as he might deem necessary for restoring or preserving the peace of the country. But to show him perhaps how completely he adopted his ideas of economy, Grey met his demands for additional means by granting him a body of four infantry and three horse to escort him back to his quarters. On account of the difficult nature of the country, an Irish peasant was added to serve as guide; and at the head of this force Raleigh left Dublin to fight his way back through an enemy's country. The Ireland of those days resembled the inland portions of Australia or the backwoods of America, save that here and there the ruins of some ancient church, monastery, or feudal castle, spoke of former attempts at civilization.

To despise a foe is never safe, as Raleigh on this homeward journey learned by experience. By acts of severity or ferocity he had caused the Catholics to regard him with hatred; and well aware of his movements, they deputed Fitz-Edmunds, seneschal of Imokelly, to be the exponent of their feelings. Raleigh had already passed Youghal, and was approaching the Blackwater, when he touched the meshes of the ambush laid for him. Habitual triumph over danger had made him reckless: like a knight of romance he pricked across the plain, meditating probably on the grand schemes he had formed for the total reduction of the

island, when Fitz-Edmunds, emerging from the woods at the head of numerous followers, caught sight of and dashed forwards to intercept him.

Raleigh with no less speed made for the ford: it was a trial of horsemanship—down the slope with whoop and yell came the Celts—on, on spurred the colossal Saxon—the river before him, the foe behind—his horse was fleet; he gained the river's bank, plunged into the stream, and soon stood on the other side, pistol in hand. His followers, thoroughly awakened to the peril of loitering, now pressed forward in all haste; Henry Moyle, a trooper, first; then Raleigh's servant, Jenkins, with two hundred pounds in his saddle-bags; with the rest of the retinue pell-mell at their heels. In the middle of the stream Moyle's horse stumbled and threw his rider, who, shouting for aid, brought Raleigh to his relief.* In their haste, however, they managed matters clumsily, for Moyle was no sooner remounted than he fell again; his horse taking fright, rushed off, and was captured by the enemy. Still Fitz-Edmunds and his galloglasses, loath to engage in a hand-to-hand encounter, kept aloof till the English had passed the ford. They however made a show of keeping up the pursuit, though at a respectful distance, till Raleigh and his men, spurring across the plain, reached a ruined castle, in which they could have defended themselves against much greater odds. Upon this Fitz-Edmunds with his followers stopped short, and soon disappeared among the woods.

Not long after reaching Cork, Raleigh wrote an account of the state of things to the Lord-deputy, from which Shakespeare might have taken his description of Falstaff's ragged regiment. "There is great need," he says, "of a supply in Munster, for the bands are all much decayed. The bands G. and . . . . were so ordered in the raising that no man was the better; for the officers had the furniture, and the soldiers ran away; the men are such froward

* Hooker, p. 441.

miserable creatures as the captains dare not lead them to serve: if your honour had beheld them when they arrived here you would think them far unfit to fight for her Majesty's crown. An like your honour there is no fit place to land them that their captains may receive them furnished but Cork, from whence they may most conveniently be delivered over."*

The object of Raleigh's absence being divined by the rebels, Lord Barry's castle of Barry Court was delivered to the flames, and the lands devastated, in order that the English might derive no benefit from their occupation. Lord Barry himself being then a prisoner in Dublin Castle, his son David exercised authority in his name, dismantling strongholds and raising troops. When called upon by Ormond to explain his conduct, he, like the Earl of Essex twenty years later, pretended to fear that Raleigh would take his life, since, together with Sir Warham St Leger, he had obtained from the Lord-deputy authority to do with him and his estates what he listed.† From an incident belonging to this part of Raleigh's story, we perceive that the spirit of knight-errantry was not yet extinct. At a parley between the Lord-governor and the rebels, Raleigh observing Fitz-Edmunds among them, taunted him for his cowardice, since at the ford, when the Irish were to the English as twenty to one, he declined coming to close quarters; to this the seneschal made no reply, but one of his followers answered that though his master had been on that day wanting in courage, nothing of the kind would ever happen again. Ormond, overhearing what was said, proposed to the seneschal a combat of two, four, or six, against as many Irish, if they desired to give proof of their valour. I will come, he said, with Walter Raleigh and four others,

* Raleigh to the Lord-deputy, February 23rd, 1581, 'Irish Papers.' State Paper Office.

† Ormond to the Lord-deputy, March 13th, 'Irish Papers.' This letter is signed *copia vera*, with the name of Edmund Spenser.

we will cross the great river and there encounter as many of you rebels, and try on which side the superiority of valour lies. The challenge, however, was not accepted.

But though Raleigh and Ormond were for a while on friendly terms, dissensions gradually arose between them. Men in office, especially in distant provinces, commonly satisfy themselves with doing as little as possible for the public service, and view with dislike all who urge them to perform more. Raleigh, whose energy was indefatigable, beheld with impatience the listlessness of Ormond, and complained of it to the Lord-deputy, which led to the removal of the earl from his command; yet the tone of his suggestions is so proud, peremptory, and masterful, that it appears to have inspired Grey with jealousy.

Whatever others might do, the centurion of Cork allowed himself no respite from labour and study. He desired to put an end to the rebellion, and re-establish Elizabeth's authority from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway. In consequence of this irrepressible energy, and the genius that guided it, he became, in the opinion of the Lord-deputy's own secretary, better qualified than any other man living to quench the fires of insurrection, and wisely to govern Ireland. He understood the causes that gave perennial life to rebellion, and made civil war the inheritance of every successive Lord-deputy.

He had yet the simplicity to imagine he should earn favour with his superiors by imparting to them his bold and perspicuous ideas, though he speedily made the discovery that to rise above them in generalship or policy was only to provoke their hatred. He offended Ormond by proving himself abler than he; he incurred the persevering enmity of Grey by communicating to the Queen a plan for the government of Munster at once effective and economical.

On the 1st of May, 1581, Raleigh forwarded to the already irritated Lord-deputy his opinion on the state of

affairs in Munster in a letter, the style of which is that of equal writing to equal, not that of a captain addressing his general :—

"Fearing that it should seem strange unto your lordship the little service done in these parts, I presume to write unto your honour in my own excuse, lest your lordship should grow in ill opinion of us that are and have been continually lying in the presence of the enemy to be directed. The bands of Sir George Bourchier, Edward Barkley, Captain Dowdall, and of myself, have ever been since the second week of Lent, remaining in Cork, and both the great wood of Conolagh, Harlo Clenlis, and all the county of Limerick, and counties between the Dingle and Kilkenny, left without any companies, either to defend itself or annoy the enemy; since which time we have made two journeys, the one towards Kilkenny to give convoy to my lord and attend his return, and the other into Conolagh, by which journeys, the one being in horrible weather, and the other utterly bootless, being done without draught or espial; and besides being enforced to walk such unreasonable marches, where we despatched a churl of the traitors, we lamed, lost, or left behind a soldier unserviceable with two of our men.

"The poor bands have cursed the change they made in leaving to follow your honour, as they have told the Lord-general many times; and this 1st of May we are going another posting convoy towards Kilkenny; but to colour the matter we shall march some two days out of our way to seek we know not whom. The store of Cork, except it be a small quantity of wheat and butter, is all spent within the walls; and now it will be alleged we cannot serve for want of victuals, or else because the bands are not supplied; although we were never less than four hundred strong; and yet Sir George Bourchier's and Captain Barkley's left at Killmallock and Askyton. We have spent these two months of the spring in parleys with David Barry, Barry Roe, the Countess of Desmond, and Finnan McCarthy; and

we think it will be two months more ere he will be resolved whether these ought to be followed or no—and yet there is no day passeth without some traitorous villanies by the Barries committed. The Countess of Desmond is returned, and brought so many followers with her hither to carry provision with her as the earl for his part shall be better able to keep the field all this summer, and at her going away, none of her train either searched or looked over.

"Barry Roe is . . . . the Lady Barry having gathered her goods into Cork, and fearing that by the attainder of her husband these will be found for the Queen. Her young son (Barry Roe), that five days before fell on the garrison of Youghal, is brought in to serve that town, to carry the goods into O'Sullivan's country or elsewhere for the more safety, and besides this man shall keep some store of cattle and such impotent people as cannot follow Davey Barry into the field, with many other—either for the Queen or for the laws * * * * * * * * * * Barry Court and the island which your honour willed me to keep, hath since been many times defaced and the other spoiled and preyed. From this island the traitors can never want neither wine, nor salt, iron, nor any other necessary provision, nor, if need be, advertisement from Spain or elsewhere, being common for any man to land on. Notwithstanding it is left naked, and the castle broken that stood at the entrance thereof, I will at my own cost build it up again, and defend it for her Majesty. I would rather be an humble and earnest suitor to your honour for it, in that I hear the Lord-general purposeth, when I have taken the toil in making it defensible and been at the charge, to turn me over for my charges to the Queen, and dispose of the island to some other. I hope your honour will stand my good lord therein. If it please your honour to give me commission, there may be another hundred soldiers laid upon the country hereabout. I hope it will be a most honourable matter for your lordship, most acceptable to her

Majesty, and profitable to the country, and the right means to banish all idle and fruitless galloglasses and kerns, the ministers of all mischiefs. Thus most humbly beseeching your honour not to condemn any of us that are willing to deserve your honour's favour, I humbly take my leave."*

The Lord-deputy, thoroughly tired of his office, had already, in the spring of 1581, begun to press for his recall. The pay of his army was so far in arrears, that when in the course of the summer a considerable sum was remitted to him, it barely sufficed to allow the soldiers two shillings in the pound. Secretly the Home Government, like the first Napoleon, meant to quarter the troops upon the country, a system which—soldiers being neither provident nor economical—soon exhausted the resources of Ireland; after which the army had frequently no other subsistence than the flesh of dead horses, cows, sheep, and other loathsome offal.† Mercy to the natives under such circumstances was hardly to be looked for.

Having received Raleigh's letter, Grey, on the 14th of May, repeated to Walsingham his desire to be relieved from what he deemed an intolerable burden. Means had been suggested for defraying the expense of two thousand men, and the secretary might perceive, he said, by Mr Raleigh's letter, that others could discover no impossibility in it. To persons so sanguine he was willing to relinquish the honour of carrying out their own designs, while he, in a tone of pique and sarcasm, begs Elizabeth to set him at liberty. "By your letters," he observes to Walsingham, "I perceive the hardness and in a manner resolution of her Majesty to leave this country to tumble into the sway of their own sensual government. Well, God send her Majesty the quiet good and honour of it she expects; for mine own part, if regard of God and her Majesty moved me not, I, as any other governor, might be glad of it, that course no doubt being to lay the easiest and gainfulest trade for him that

* Cork, May 1st, 1581. † Murdin, pp. 348, 361.

shall carry the office; but confessing that my conscience may not be persuaded to be an instrument to such a purpose, good sir, afford the uttermost of your wonted favour in getting me discharged; that shall be, to me, not a pain, but performance of your faithful friendship and goodwill."*

Some of Raleigh's services while at Cork were extremely unpleasant. Nearly all the Irish nobles were suspected of holding communication with the rebels; thus the Earl of Kildare, and his son, the Baron of Ophalia, being accused of treason, though, as far as can be discovered, without the least truth, were sent over to England and lodged in the Tower, where, after a long captivity, the father died. In like manner the Lord Roche was now assailed by evil reports, for which reason Ormond commissioned Raleigh, whom he evidently regarded as the most daring officer under his command, to proceed with his company to Bally-in-Harsh, where Roche had a castle, and there to seize and bring him and his wife prisoners to Cork.

Between the issuing of the order and its execution no delay was interposed. On the same night, at the head of ninety men, ten of whom were cavalry, Raleigh set out, about eleven o'clock, and pushing forward in the dark, through miry roads beset with enemies, presented himself early in the morning before the castle gate, close to which lay a town inhabited by Lord Roche's retainers, who prepared to defend their chief. Seeing them come forth to the number of about five hundred, Raleigh ordered his men to keep the townspeople in check, and accompanied by his lieutenant, Butler, with some other officers, knocked loudly at the gate. They were presently answered from within by some of Lord Roche's gentlemen, who on hearing that the captain desired to speak with their lord, said he might enter if accompanied only by two of his followers. Raleigh insisted on the admission of all those that were with

* Grey to Walsingham. Dublin, May 14th, 1581. MS. 'Irish Papers.'

him, and the soldiers approaching from the town during the parley, contrived, a few at a time, to insinuate themselves into the court, and then closing the iron gates, the castle with all its inmates was at their mercy.

Lord Roche had now no choice but to receive the English officers, whom he invited to dinner. Raleigh then explained the object of his visit, and showed the commission by which he was ordered to take his lordship and his lady prisoners, and conduct them into the presence of the Earl of Ormond at Cork.

To this Lord Roche, relying probably on the number of his retainers, replied that he neither could nor would obey the orders of Ormond; but upon Raleigh's observing that if his lordship refused to go peaceably he must take him by force, he understood the impolicy of resistance, and consented to depart. At Raleigh's suggestion his lordship ordered the townspeople to form themselves into a guard to protect his departure, and saying that he was in a condition to clear himself, Roche set out cheerfully with his captors.

Having received intelligence that Barry and Fitz-Edmunds, with about seven or eight hundred men, lay in ambush on the road to Cork, Raleigh again chose the night for his march. The distance was trifling, not exceeding twenty miles, but the ways being miry, broken, beset with rocks, and full of sloughs and pitfalls, it was difficult to advance in the pitchy darkness. The weather was, besides, tempestuous, and the cold severe; but nothing could dismay Raleigh or his men, who marched ready at any moment for battle, and partly through skill, partly through good fortune, eluded the vigilance of the rebel force, and reached Cork without losing a man. The captive nobleman, whether innocent or guilty, contrived to make out a good case, and there is reason to believe he had been calumniated, since he ever afterwards clung to the English party, and lost three of his sons in its cause.*

* Hooker, p. 444.

When in the summer of 1581 the Earl of Ormond ceased to be general in Munster, the government of the province was intrusted to Sir William Morgan, Walter Raleigh, and Captain Piers, till Zouch, the new governor, should arrive. These officers lived in camp at Lismore, on the Blackwater, whence, on the 25th of August, Raleigh wrote to his friend and early patron Leicester, complaining of his wretched position in Ireland. "I have spent some time here under the deputy," he says, "in such poor place and charge as were it not for that I know him to be as if yours, I would disdain it as much as to keep sheep. I will not trouble your honour with the business of this lost land, for that Sir Warham St Leger can best, of any man, deliver unto your lordship the good, the bad, the mischiefs, the means to amend, and all in all of this common wealth, or rather common woe."*

While proceeding, in September, from Lismore to Cork, preparatory to quitting Ireland, Raleigh became entangled in an adventure which nearly put a period to his career. He might well speak of the country as a lost land, since nothing went on there as in other parts of the world. Rebellion did not signify a simultaneous rising of the people, the organizing of large bodies, an army, a camp, a common treasury, a general leading his followers to victory or defeat—but an endless series of ambushes, murders, forays, revenges, with no other result than to render a settled government impossible.

Having spent the summer in scouring the woods and fastnesses in Waterford, Cork, and Tipperary, Raleigh left Lismore, and at the head of eight horse and eighty foot, took the road to Cork. Though warned that Barry, with several hundred men, had taken post on his line of march, contempt for the enemy led him to attach no importance to the intelligence.

In fact, when he approached this rabble of kerns and galloglasses, they fled and dispersed, which inspiring him

* Wright, 'Elizabeth and her Times,' ii. 149.

with still greater contempt, he rode like a knight-errant across the plain, followed by six horsemen, considerably in advance of his infantry. Observing a number of Irish making towards a wood, he galloped forwards to intercept them, upon which they faced about, and made a rush at their assailants. A hand-to-hand contest ensued, the kerns with their skenes and pikes killed several horses, and mortally wounded Raleigh's own steed, which plunged so violently in the agonies of death that its rider was in danger of being run through with a pike before he could disengage himself from the stirrups. He owed his life to the courage and fidelity of his servant, Nicholas Wright, a Yorkshireman, who, shouting to the English soldiers to rescue their captain, charged the enemy; at the same moment FitzRichard and a friendly kern disentangled Raleigh from his dying horse. At his captain's call Wright ceased from pursuing the Irish to defend FitzRichard: there was a mêlée, English, kerns, galloglasses, thrusting, cutting, without order; but at length the rebels fled, several of their number having been slain or taken prisoners.

With this adventure terminated Raleigh's personal services in Ireland, which in the month of December he left as the bearer of despatches from his cousin Colonel John Zouch, Governor of Munster, to Lord Burleigh.*

The handsome soldier no sooner appeared at court, where he had numerous relatives and friends, than he became the favourite of Elizabeth, who doubtless regretted he had been suffered to remain absent so long. His manner, we are told, was always winning—his speech eloquent, and the tone of his conversation at once peremptory and persuasive. At the age of twenty-nine, therefore, he began to be regarded with high favour and indulgence by his sovereign of forty-eight. He described to her the wars of Ireland,

* Zouch's Despatches are dated December 4th, 1581, and he observes that the bearer will explain to his lordship "the manner of his taking upon him the government of Munster." State Paper Office.

gave her frankly his opinion of Ormond and Grey, and delivered to her in writing a "plot," as it was then called, for the better government of Munster, for the disciplining and disposal of the garrisons, for repressing rebellion, and effecting a large saving for the treasury. This was attacking Elizabeth on her weak side, especially when the cause of economy was advocated by so magnificent a pleader. When the aspiring captain sailed from Cork, Grey probably hoped he had not only seen the last of him, but experienced the last of his influence. He was mistaken. The sceptre of thought which Raleigh wielded would throw its long shadow from Nonsuch to Dublin, and startle the Lord-deputy in his castle there. It appears to have been with dismay that Grey heard of Raleigh's plan for the better government of Munster, at which his fiery temper boiled over in the following fierce letter to the Earl of Leicester:—

"Having lately received advertisement of a plot delivered by Captain Raleigh unto her Majesty for the lessening of her charges here in the province of Munster, and disposing of the garrison according to the same—the matter at the first, indeed, offering a very plausible show of thrift and consideration, might easily occasion her Majesty to think that I have not so carefully as behoved looked into the state of that cause and the search of her Majesty's profit. Wherefore having with some of the best advised of the council here enclosed with consideration thereof, and perceiving many inconveniences with some impossibilities in the account, we have (as by our general letters to her Majesty herewith you may perceive) laid down our judgment and opinion thereof, which when it shall come unto your lordship's deeper consultations, I doubt not but you will soon discern a difference between the judgment of those who with grounded experience and approved reason look into the condition of things, and those who upon no ground but seeming fancies and effecting credit with benefit, frame plots upon impossibilities for others to execute; and so, trusting

that your lordship with the rest will esteem of both, for the rest I will refer you to those reasons which we have in our said letter laid before her Majesty. Furthermore, I have to complain to your lordship, whose only redress I look for in these matters, of the great slackness and default of Bland, the garrison of Munster utterly starved by him, &c.

P. S.—It hath pleased God to give the Lord Zouch the killing of the Lord of Desmond, that arch rebel and traitor. I heard of it three days past, but this night I received the perfect confirmation thereof, and with him hath he taken another notorious knave, called James FitzJohn of Strangallie. The news I trust will not dislike your lordship, as well in the private behalf of your poor kinsman's good hap as of the common good, neither will your lordship, I hope, spare to advance the due commendations of the endeavour to her Majesty."*

It was not long before Lord-deputy Grey made the discovery of how formidable a rival in the Queen's favour he now had. Leicester indeed was his kinsman—but Leicester's own statue often rocked on its pedestal when touched by the finger of Raleigh, to whom not many years later he chiefly owed his reinstatement in Elizabeth's favour. On the 2nd of April Walsingham forwarded a despatch to Grey, in which reference was made to the Queen's letter of the day before. What his feelings were on the receipt of it we may conjecture from the language in which he professes obedience to her Majesty's commands, which he affects not to have received in her own words. When, however, he read and reflected on her language, he must clearly have understood both Raleigh's position and his own.

"Right-trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Whereas we be given to understand that Captain Appesley is not long since deceased, and the band of footmen which he had committed to James Fenton, for that as we are informed the said Fenton hath otherwise an entertainment by a cer-

* 'Irish Papers.'

tain ward under his charge; but chiefly for that our pleasure is to have our servant, Walter Raleigh, trained some longer time in that our realm for his better experience in martial affairs, and for the special care we have to do him good, in respect of his kindred that have served us, some of them as you know near about our person. These are to require you that the leading of the said band may be committed to the said Raleigh, and for that he is for so many considerations by us licensed to stay here, our pleasure is that the said band shall be in the mean time, till he repair unto that our realm, delivered to so many officers, as he shall (appoint) to be his lieutenants there, *with charge* that they *yield to him* and his lieutenants, *like quiet obedience as they did to Appesley*, which shall be our good intention. Given at our Manor of Greenwich, the — day of April, 1582, in the twenty-fourth year of our reign." *

It could scarcely be expected that Grey would allow such an occasion to pass without giving vent to the feelings he cherished towards Raleigh. Allowing himself several weeks to cool, reflection and leisure could yet not restrain him within the bounds of moderation, though he well knew that what he wrote Elizabeth would read. "As to Captain Raleigh's assignment to charge of Appesley's band, which in your letter of the 2nd of April you write to be signified unto me by a letter from her Majesty, I have no letter that specified any such thing to me, and for mine own part I must be plain,—I neither like his carriage nor his company, and therefore other than by direction and commandment, and what his rights require, he is not to expect from my hands." †

After this we experience no surprise that in three months from the date of this communication Grey had ceased to be Lord-deputy of Ireland.

* 'Irish Papers.' † Grey to Walsingham, 'Irish Papers.'

CHAPTER VI.

IMMERSED IN COURT INTRIGUES.

Raleigh found the court in a state of extraordinary excitement, caused by the arrival of the Duc d'Anjou, formerly Alençon, who hoped to win a crown by taking to wife a lady old enough to be his mother. Whether or not Elizabeth desired to take a husband at all may be matter of doubt, but whatever her wishes may have been, her reason soon became convinced, that an union with him, whom Sidney in his rough language calls "the son of the Jezebel of the age," * was a step too hazardous to be ventured upon.

Leicester, who understood both his mistress and the nation, was far too subtle a politician to be defeated by a stripling as hideous in mind and manners as he was in person. It seems probable that he had in reality no obstacles to surmount, and that it was agreed between him and the Queen that the French court should be soothed, and public opinion on the Continent conciliated by putting on the appearance of yielding only to necessity in rejecting the last matrimonial offers that could be made by one of Catherine de Medici's sons. We have seen, and shall see again, how skilfully Elizabeth could play the actress, and therefore need attach little importance to her dramatic flirtations with Anjou, to the incident of the ring, to her deep sighs, to her crocodile tears, or to any of those other external manifestations of passion which she could put on or off as easily as

* Letter to the Queen. 'Sidney State Papers.'

her glove. Besides, with the magnificent Leicester, the gentle Hatton, and the gallant and handsome Raleigh at her side, is it to be credited that she could have cherished for one moment the project of linking herself to a creature as frightful as the "Devil's dam?"

After tolerating three months of amorous fooling, Leicester dismissed his would-be rival; and to soften his discomfiture, consented to escort him out of the land, accompanied by a brilliant retinue, among whom were Raleigh and Sidney.* It was Elizabeth's intention, we are told, to proceed as far as Dover, but the plague breaking out in that place,† she stopped short at Canterbury. To Raleigh the Queen now deigned to show especial favour, by intrusting him with a secret mission to the Prince of Orange, which, when the other noblemen and gentlemen should return, would detain him for a while in the Low Countries.

In spite of my general view of this transaction, I confess that some circumstances connected with it seem to be at variance with my interpretation of Elizabeth's conduct. On Sunday, February 11th, three days after the duke's departure, Burleigh wrote a long letter to Walsingham, concluding with an exceedingly curious paragraph:—"Marchmont," he says, "is come to this town, and desireth to speak to me, which I think must be for money, I pray you know her Majesty's mind herein . . . of late his lodgings in Cannon Row was robbed, and in a trunk his writing was also embezzled, and the trunk conveyed into a garden, when the persons that found it brought to me the very indented papers, written betwixt de Bex and you, written in your name, the discovery whereof made me ready to blush to see by that accident such profligacy. . . . As I can guess wickedness in that house bred the theft, as the like did to

* 'Sidney State Papers.' Mr Lloyd, 'Life of Sir Philip Sidney,' p. 136.

† Lord Charles Howard to Walsingham, February 4th, 1582. State Paper Office.

Combelles by that infamous strumpet, Lady Hilton."* As Anjou appears to have been always in want of money, he had probably extorted from Elizabeth a promise to replenish his empty purse, and left behind Monsieur de Bex, his ordinary gentleman of the chamber, to transact the business with Walsingham. The negotiation was successful, for in an exchequer account dated 24th of March following, we find the same de Bex bearing an order to the secretary for fifteen thousand pounds in gold to be conveyed to France, and there laid out in her Majesty's service: this enormous sum, equal to seventy-five thousand pounds of our day, was no doubt meant for the use of Elizabeth's unsuccessful suitor.

By the end of March Raleigh had completed his business in the Netherlands, and returned, bearing letters from the Prince of Orange to Elizabeth. Surrounded by his kinsfolk, who formed no small portion of the court, he thenceforward devoted himself to the Queen, whose favour he had already won. His conversation, all writers agree, was brilliant and fascinating, though tradition ascribes to him an awfulness of aspect which daunted ordinary listeners.† His mistress, however, was charmed by it, as well as by the splendour of his person and manners, and laid so much stress upon his counsel that she was accused of regarding him as an oracle.‡ From the tone of his mind, from the topics on which he loved to think and write, from his proficiency in literature, above all in poetry—which it is well known Elizabeth loved—from his experience in peace and war, still more from his fiery temperament and ardent passion for adventure, his eloquence, we may be sure, ranged freely over all those subjects which were most adapted to kindle her imagination. When opportunity offered he could likewise say soft things as well as Oxford or Hatton—and to subdue a fierce and awful nature into softness is a triumph

* Burleigh to Walsingham, February 11th, 1582. State Paper Office.
† Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii. 509.
‡ Fragmenta Regalia.

in which women always delight. Elizabeth, accordingly, appears to have been more flattered by Raleigh's adoration than by that of any other among her lovers. Scandal immediately became busy with their connection, and caused it to be whispered throughout Europe, especially at the courts favourable to Mary Stuart, that the man whose hands had been made red with blood at del Oro had now become Elizabeth's minion,* and decked with silk, gold, and jewels, flitted like an Adonis about her person.

Leicester had long reached that philosophic state in which, provided he preserved his political ascendancy, he could easily tolerate the multiplication of partners in Elizabeth's affection. He had her cousin at Kenilworth; he had young and lovely mistresses at court;† he could afford, therefore, to behold his youthful protégé, Raleigh, dislodging Hatton from his position, and receiving some drops of that love-shower of manors, castles, and estates which she rained so lavishly upon her favourites. Cicero, describing his contemporaries, says of one of them, that he rendered himself exceedingly unpopular by his inability to tolerate the ignorance of those around him. It was much the same with Raleigh, whose scoffs and sarcasms were as keen as his sword.

I have already said that Elizabeth's love for Hatton had now, in 1582, lost all the fervour of passion, though she still retained for him an affectionate and generous friendship; but he who seems never to have cared much for any one else, could not be satisfied with so altered a sentiment. Cynics might pretend that he only longed for the good things which her love had formerly lavished on him; but this was not the case. He grieved to see that while her bounty towards him knew no stint, either in opulence or honours, she evidently gave up herself to his rival. This wrung his heart, this poisoned his extraordinary worldly success, and this in-

* Morgan to Mary Stuart from the Bastile, March 31st, 1586. State Paper Office.

† Lodge, ii. 17.

cessantly corroding his sensitive nature—laid him, before he had passed the noon of life, in his remote grave at Holdenby. At the time of which I am speaking, however, he took what steps he could to bring back the Queen's capricious preference. Elizabeth had passed with her new favourite into the familiarity of using the Christian name, which she condescended to pronounce playfully without the L, saying to him, "Come here!" or, "Go there, Water!" Hatton, whom the same lips had formerly sported with, as "Lids," "Belwether," or "Pecora Campi," well understood the import of this free-and-easy way of speaking to a man: and in the hope of regaining his old influence, repeated the experiment, the danger of which Sir Edward Dyer * had long ago pointed out to him.

Many critics of our day are fond of searching among Eizabeth's courtiers for the prototypes of Shakespeare's remarkable characters. Essex being Hamlet, Southampton Horatio, and so on. By the same rule Sir Thomas Heneage must surely be Polonius. It was through this solemn personage, upon whose gratitude for numerous favours conferred Hatton rightly counted, that the assault on the Queen's tenderness was to be made. Desirous of symbolizing the apprehensions with which the humid element inspired him, the ex-favourite chose three things to intimate the nature of his fears. The most obvious of course was a letter in which he could explain himself without symbols, but she might refuse to read it. In that case her imagination was to be addressed by the present of a bucket which would suggest how anxious he was to provide against the danger with which he was threatened by "Water." Last came a bodkin, a thing of more uses than one, for while it might be employed to keep a woman's tresses from falling into disorder, it might also, in the hands of despair, give a deserted lover his quietus.

Some such nonsensical meaning as this was, I fancy, in-

* Nicholas, 'Introduction to Davison's Rhapsody,' i. 73.

tended to be conveyed by the missive and symbols confided to the hands of Sir Thomas Heneage. Faithful to his trust, the go-between watched for the auspicious moment when Raleigh should be out of the way; but so assiduous was his attendance upon Elizabeth, so mindful of the necessity of warding off all sinister influences, that Polonius' ingenuity was sorely put to the test. The way in which the business was at length managed he shall be allowed to explain in his own words: "I received your letters," he says, "with your token to her Majesty before ten of the clock this morning, which I carried up immediately to her Highness, then ready to ride abroad to kill a doe in the parrock of the Great Park; and desiring to furnish her Majesty with the bucket, because I thought, as it happened, Water should be so nigh her as soon as she came out of her drawing-chamber, I presented her withal, together with the letter you wrote, which she took in her hand, and smiling, said, 'There was never such another,' and seeking to put the bodkin in her head, where it could not well abide, she gave it me again, and the letter withal; which when she came into the standing in the parrock, she took of me and read, and with blushing cheeks uttered many speeches (which I refer till I see you) the most of them tending to the discovery of a doubtful mind, whether she should be angry or well-pleased: in the end showing, upon conference, her settled opinion of the fidelity and fastness of your affection, and her determination ever to give you good cause nothing to doubt her favour."*

Lovers usually invent for themselves a language and expressive symbols, the subtle meaning of which they at least hope no one else will discover. This was pre-eminently the case with Elizabeth and Hatton; they talked in hieroglyphics, but so little able were they to conceal what lay beneath the surface that the least Machiavelian of courtiers could hardly fail to detect their drift. When Hatton

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 275.

selected from the treasures of Egyptian lore the triangle as his cypher, Elizabeth could not have felt otherwise than flattered by the adoration of the sex which it implied. Sometimes words with a double meaning familiarly known to both were employed, and according to the accident of time, either suggested ideas of impassioned delight or of cold and vapid reminiscence. Though Elizabeth blushed—as no doubt she well might—at the circumstances which Hatton brought to her recollection, she was not unwilling that, while Raleigh possessed the substance, Hatton should still be indulged with Ixion's part.

Heneage, in spite of his anxiety to be exact, may possibly have remembered Elizabeth's words imperfectly, or else she was thrown into such a flutter by the presence of one lover, and the remembrance of another, that her language fell disjointed from her lips. "That which I was willed to write unto you is this, that she liked your preamble so ill as she had little list to look on the bucket or the book; and that if princes were like gods, as they should be, they would suffer no element so to abound as to breed confusion; and that Pecora Campi was so dear unto her that she *had bounded her banks so sure* as no water or floods could be able ever to overthrow them. And for better assurance unto you that you should fear no evil, she hath sent you a bird, that together with the rainbow brought the good tidings and the covenant that there should be no more destruction by water." *

These deceitful assurances brought but little comfort to the unhappy Sir Christopher, whose absence from court became more and more frequent, because when he went thither he witnessed little but new marks of preference for his ambitious rival. His dancing-days were over, though Elizabeth's were not; and he had no projects of conquest, glory, or gain to inflame her imagination or stimulate her cupidity. On the other hand, Raleigh, to whom love was only a pastime, and a mistress a plaything, had a brain

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 277.

which absolutely seethed with vast designs. He saw that England by no means occupied the position which nature meant her to hold in the political world, and threw forth his thoughts in all directions to discover suitable means and an adequate field on which to develop her energies.

Elizabeth's government met with constant checks and impediments through the scantiness of its finances, and it was beyond the competence of the statesmen of the day to supply the deficiency. Raleigh's vigorous and searching mind had made the discovery that an immense revenue could only be obtained through free trade; but as that idea was not likely to meet with much favour from the Lord Treasurer, he had to devise other plans for filling the national coffers. Spain, he knew, imported incalculable treasures from America, where gold, it was believed, sparkled in every stream, and lay in exhaustless abundance in the bowels of every mountain. Thitherward, therefore, should the enterprise of England tend; and at the very moment when his dalliance with the Queen maddened Sir Christopher Hatton, and appeared to absorb his thoughts and exhaust his vigour, his imagination, in truth, was wafting its way across the Atlantic, and planting in the virgin soil of North America the germs of those mighty colonies whose power and grandeur constitute at this moment the astonishment if not the terror of the world.

An interval of three years from the failure of his first expedition to the West Indies had sufficed to relume his hopes: Sir Humphrey Gilbert, also, with the buoyant spirit of a true adventurer, was recovering, though slowly, from the blow dealt him by the Spaniards in 1579; and the object of both the half-brothers being the same, they laboured conjointly to interest all around them in their project, the conception of which implied the existence in their minds of ideas far in advance of their age. Gilbert, however, had hitherto profited but little by the knowledge he possessed; for having lost hold of the skirts of Fortune, he

went on ever after vainly plunging forward in the hope of grasping them again. Three ships, all that remained of his former fleet, he had lent to the Government, to be employed against the Spaniards on the Irish coast; but the money due to him for these services he found it impossible to obtain from the Lord Treasurer. In the summer of 1582 he repeated to Walsingham his application for payment, and complained that although he had served her Majesty from boyhood to the age of white hairs,* the means of performing still more for her and for the country were withheld from him.

But he had now at length got an advocate at court to whose pleading Elizabeth could not refuse to listen. Still though she smiled faintly on the plan for fitting out another expedition, she appears to have contributed but little money, and her example becoming contagious, Gilbert's design obtained the countenance of very few, though among those few Philip Sidney was one.†

At the outset Raleigh intended to accompany his half-brother; but the Queen, being disinclined to part so soon with her new favourite, overruled his design. She, moreover, entertained an objection to Gilbert's commanding the fleet in person, having observed, as she expressed it, that "he had no good hap at sea:" in what hap consists no philosopher has yet explained, though a large portion of history be only a commentary on the fact, that certain families and individuals, distinguished for great abilities, have yet found their fortunes blossom only to be blighted. In Gilbert's case we need perhaps seek no other explanation than the fact that with slender resources he attempted great undertakings, and could therefore have only hoped for success through the interference of that power which Raleigh denominates "the god of fools." With a nation's revenues at their backs, Raleigh and Gilbert might have turned the

* Gilbert to Walsingham, July 11th, 1582. State Paper Office.
† 'Sidney Papers,' i. 298.

stream of human affairs into a new channel, and impressed a different aspect on the history of the world. As it was, the smallness of their means contrasted so strikingly with the vastness of their aim that nothing but respect for their genius can even now protect their enterprises from ridicule.

To form part of Gilbert's fleet, Raleigh built a ship, and bestowed on it his own name, with which aid Gilbert was constrained to content himself. At length his little fleet, manned, victualled, and ready for sea, was collected on the Devonshire coast, where he received the following letter from Raleigh: "Brother, I have sent you a token from her Majesty—an anchor guided by a lady—as you see; and further, her Highness willed me to send you word, that she wished you as great good hap and safety to your ship as if herself were there in person, desiring you to have care of yourself as of that which she tendereth, and therefore for her sake you must provide for it accordingly; further, she commandeth that you leave your picture with me. For the rest I leave it to our meeting or to the report of this bearer, who would needs be the messenger of this good news. So I commend you to the will and protection of God, who sends us such life or death as he shall please or hath appointed."

After receiving this ominous letter, Gilbert was detained by contrary winds nearly three months in and about Plymouth Sound; but at length quitted Cawsand Bay in the heart of summer, and sailed forth into the Atlantic.

Into the melancholy history of this voyage it would be beside my purpose to enter at length. Away went the gallant explorer towards the West, and for several months kept moving to and fro over the ocean, his little fleet now dispersed, now collected, till on the 9th of September, two days after Elizabeth's birthday, which her seamen always celebrated, he was beheld for the last time reclining on the deck of his vessel,* either reading or consulting some chart.

* Captain Edward Hayes, in Hakluyt, iii. 202.

Night then closed in, rough and boisterous, and when the morning of the tenth dawned, Gilbert's ship could nowhere be seen upon the waters. The brave adventurer had perished; the survivors returned to England with the evil tidings, which, instead of disheartening, only the more stimulated Raleigh to pursue and complete the design his brother had formed.

CHAPTER VII.

LAYS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COLONIAL EMPIRE.

There is little difficulty in tracing in outline the course of Raleigh's public services; but when we leave these and attempt to form an idea of his position and proceedings at court, the case is altered. It has been already seen that his rise was as rapid as it was unexpected, and that many among the nobility who wished to occupy the highest places in the Government and about the Queen without doing anything to deserve their honours, and indeed without possessing the ability to do anything, regarded the growth of his influence with malignant envy. It must no doubt have been painful to long-tried statesmen like Burleigh to ask favours of Elizabeth through the intermediation of a young man, who, as they were likely to believe, owed his power to befriend them entirely to his handsome person and winning manners. This opinion, however, of the new favourite, if they ever entertained it, was speedily destroyed by experience. Instead of displaying, like a Somerset or a Buckingham, the rudeness of an upstart, Raleigh treated his seniors and superiors in office in the most courteous and respectful manner, so that they seem gradually to have lost their repugnance to employ him as their mediator.

The Earl of Oxford, it has been seen, by marrying into Burleigh's family, became to the old man a source of perpetual vexation. Besides indulging in blasphemous and unbecoming language, which oftentimes was carried so far

as to revolt the feelings even of men of the world, he drank, gambled, and connected himself with women to be acquainted with whom was itself a disgrace. Though thoroughly irreligious, he seems to have had spasmodic fits of partiality for the old church, and was accordingly suspected, like Arundel and Paget, of conspiring against the interests of Protestantism and the State. Therefore, though his dancing may have inspired Elizabeth with admiration, his general conduct was so little to her liking, that she not only forbade him her presence, but threw him into prison. It is possible that Charles Arundel's accusations, however extravagant, may have been based on truth, especially where they carried with them the keenest sting. Raleigh observes, that if you would thrive at court, you must never venture to tell a great lady, however true it may be, that she is not fair; and Oxford was accused of having gone much farther in speaking of Elizabeth, who, he affirmed with unpardonable insolence, not only sang and danced, but did everything else with the worst grace that ever woman did.*

How much of this could have been proved Elizabeth probably never paused to inquire, but overwhelmed him at once with her indignation. As father-in-law of the offender, Burleigh naturally espoused his cause, confining his view, however, to certain public brawls and scandals, and overlooking his worst delinquencies. Assuming the influence of Hatton to be still powerful, he besought him to exert it, saying: "These things are hardly carried, and these advantages are easily gotten where *some* may say what they will against my Lord of Oxford and have presence to utter their humours, and my Lord of Oxford is neither heard nor hath presence either to complain or defend himself."†

In the above passage, by *some*, I fancy he means Raleigh,

* Particulars, by Arundel, of Oxford's Vices, 1581,—no month. State Paper Office.

† Burleigh to Hatton, March 12th, 1583. Nicholas, p. 322.

whom Oxford had forced to become his enemy; yet when all other intercessors had failed, it was to this enemy that Burleigh betook himself, entreating him not only to lay his letters before the Queen, but to become at the same time an advocate for his son-in-law. To such an appeal Raleigh could not be deaf; and without forgetting the relation in which Oxford had long stood to him, consented to plead his cause. "The evening," he says, "after the receipt of your lordship's letter, I spake with her Majesty, and ministering some occasion touching the Earl of Oxford, I told her Majesty how grievously your lordship received her late discomfortable answer. Her Majesty, as your lordship had written—I know not by whom lately and strangely persuaded—purposed to have new repetition between the Lord Howard, Arundel, and others and the Earl, and said it was a matter not so lightly to be passed over. I answered, that being assured her Majesty would never permit anything to be prosecuted to the Earl's danger, if any such possibility were—and therefore it were to small purpose, after so long absence and so many disgraces, to call his honour and name again in question whereby he might appear the less fit either for her favour or presence. In conclusion, her Majesty confessed she meant it only thereby to give the Earl warning; and that as it seemed to me being acquainted with his offences, her grace might seem the more in remitting the revenge or punishment of the same. I delivered her your lordship's letter, and what I said further, how honourable and profitable it were for her Majesty to have regard of your lordship's health and quiet, I refer to the witness of God and good report of her Highness; and the more to witness how desirous I am of your lordship's favour and good opinion, I am content for your sake to lay the serpent before the fire as much as in me lies, that having recovered strength, myself may be most . . . . . of his poison and sting. For answer her Majesty would give me no other, but that she would satisfy your lordship, of whom

she ever had and would ever have special care and regard." *

During this period, and for a few years longer, Raleigh enjoyed the advantage of conversing and corresponding familiarly with Leicester and his nephew Sidney, and was consequently looked upon as an outsider by the Cecil faction. By degrees, as their knowledge of the man increased, the leaders of the party slackened in their hostility, though there always remained a grudge at the bottom, which, as we shall see, ripened into full activity when time served.

For one great quality among many others Elizabeth was remarkable—she coveted men's love, but abhorring effeminacy, delighted to behold her lovers distinguish themselves by their achievements. Instead, therefore, of keeping Raleigh dangling perpetually about the court, she sent him down to Devonshire, that by his eloquence, of which she had felt the force, he might win for himself a place in the legislature, where he could at the same time earn distinction and promote her interests. He accordingly presented himself to the constituency, and being always popular in the West, was chosen, with Sir William Courtenay, to represent the county in parliament.† All who know anything of Raleigh are aware that he was a practical man, equal to all sorts of business, and so indefatigable in his application, that Cecil, who knew him well, used to say he worked like a horse. The scanty records of the House of Commons in those days do not enable us to form an adequate idea of his performances; we know that he frequently served on committees, and spoke on nearly all great questions that came before the House, especially such as were connected with foreign policy, religious toleration, and social or commercial reform. He was already no mean proficient in political economy, and occasionally opened up long vistas into the

* Raleigh to Burleigh, May 12th, 1583. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

† D'Ewes, p. 339.

dusky recesses of this science, which had then made little progress since the time of Aristotle.

Still the predominant idea in Raleigh's mind was that of founding for England a colonial empire, partly by discovering and peopling unknown lands, but chiefly by wresting America, North and South, from the grasp of Spain. On this subject most of his business dialogues with Sir Humphrey Gilbert may be supposed to have turned; on the same theme he frequently conversed with Sidney, as well as with many others; but his highest ambition was to inflame Elizabeth's imagination by the dazzling prospect of extending her sceptre over America, and drawing thence not only an abundance of gold, but of all such materials of commerce as might be expected to be found in vast regions altogether new.

It has been objected to Raleigh that, like some other adventurers, he looked no further than the acquisition of the precious metals, though such a notion be incompatible with the slightest acquaintance with the history of those times. Raleigh left out of sight scarcely any consideration that could actuate a statesman in coveting foreign possessions. In his addresses and memorials he constantly expatiates not only on the raw materials of opulence, but on the outlet for redundant population, on the expansion and improvement of industry, on the advantages to be derived from a large carrying trade, on the increase of political power, and on the satisfaction of imparting the Christian religion and a more enlightened morality to savage races. These were the topics by which he prevailed upon the Queen, as well as upon parliament, to favour his scheme of colonization, which on March 25th, 1584,* was shown by the famous patent granted him to search out and take possession of new lands in the western hemisphere.

No sooner had he as lord proprietor obtained authority over the countries that should be explored and annexed to

* See the Letters Patent in Hakluyt, iii. 297.

the British crown, than he equipped and sent forth two ships under the command of Philip Amadas,* and Arthur Barlow the historiographer of the voyage, who left the shores of England on the 27th of April.

The predominant idea in the mind of that age was, that Pagans possessed no right to the regions they inhabited, and that it was consequently lawful, religious, and moral to invade their territories, seize upon their estates, reduce them personally to the condition of serfs, or rather, ignoring their existence altogether, to deal with their possessions as so many desert tracts. This theory originated at Rome, whose popes, with the connivance of all Catholic Europe, arrogated to themselves the power of annulling the laws of nature, and hallowing the worst excesses of crime and cruelty in the appropriation of newly-discovered lands.

In the very word discovery there lurked a pernicious fallacy; when a country had been peopled and cultivated, it had obviously been discovered by man, though it remained unknown to some sections of the human family, holding opinions and following practices differing from those followed and held by its possessors. According to the eternal laws of right and wrong, the Red Indians, had they arrived in a fleet of canoes on the coast of Spain, France, or England,

* There is at Simancas an extremely curious document, being the deposition of Richard Butler before the criminal court at Madrid, where he was arraigned as a spy. Having left Ireland at the age of ten, he came to London, and entered as a page into the service of Raleigh, who, when he had reached the age of sixteen, sent him with Captain Amadas to make discoveries in America. His narrative, either through his own errors or those of the transcriber, makes sad havoc with dates, but in other respects seems deserving of credit. That he was, when taken, a spy in Raleigh's service, I make no doubt; and that he could, had he been inclined, have stated many more startling particulars than those which his conscience led him, as he piously affirmed, to disclose to the court, with the fear of the Inquisition before his eyes. His companions in misfortune on this occasion were three young Englishmen, who, in the habit of Franciscan friars, peered about through Philip's dominions for the service of Elizabeth. The rest of their story may still lie hidden in the general archives of Simancas, where possibly it may yet be found. Declaracion que dio Ricardo Butiler, 2 de Mayo, 1593. Simancas.

might with as much justice have called themselves discoverers, and seized upon the estates of Papists and Protestants because they did not stick feathers in their heads, tattoo their bodies, and worship some personifications of the forces of nature, recognized as divinities in America. But might being identified with right, the natives of the whole world, and Raleigh among the rest, were eager to set up the standards of their respective countries in every region where they could, by arms, convert their will into law.

While Raleigh's ships were steering their memorable course across the Atlantic, which led to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxons in North America and the founding of the United States, the favourite himself was engaged in very different transactions at home. His relatives and connections were already widely scattered over the south of England and Wales, and through intermarriage were daily extending the network of his kinship and influence. I have more than once alluded to the friendship existing between Raleigh and the most prominent member of the Sidney family, which was now to be cemented by the union of their houses.

Without climbing genealogical trees, I may observe that Sir Philip Champernoun, of Modbury, in Devonshire,* had two daughters, one of whom was married to Raleigh's father, the other to a Mr Gamage, a man of Norman descent and of large possessions in Glamorganshire. The offspring of this marriage, John Gamage, died young, leaving behind him Barbara, an only daughter, the heiress of all his estates. Barbara, it is said, was still more remarkable for her beauty than for her riches, so that her hand was sought eagerly by numerous suitors, among whom was Philip Sidney's younger brother Robert, in whose behalf Raleigh was induced to interest himself with his cousin. Though a young man, he set about the matter with the coolness of an octogenarian, and instead of making the least inquiry about the young lady's likings

* 'Stradling Correspondence,' pp. 22, 23.

or dislikings, wrote directly to her guardian, Sir Edward Stradling, cautioning him, as he would answer for the same to her Majesty, not to afford encouragement to any wooer but one who should be approved of by her nearest kindred.* The gay and handsome Robert Sidney was then proposed as a suitor, whose success, Sir Edward was informed, would give satisfaction to her Majesty. Stradling seems to have cherished no dislike to the proposed match, and by way of giving proof of his amity, presented the author of the Arcadia with a fine horse. To render success in negotiation more sure, Walsingham directed the guardian to send up Barbara to London forthwith, that she might be under the eye of her nearest relatives, the Lord Hunsdon and Mr Raleigh.† By the marriage of his cousin with Robert Sidney, a family-tie was woven between Raleigh and Robert's uncle, the Earl of Leicester, who, while he lived, watched over the young Sidneys with something like the fondness of a parent. It was this same Robert who, after being created Viscount Lisle, succeeded ultimately to the Earldom of Leicester. As to Barbara, she became a noted personage in Elizabeth's court, partly for her beauty, but chiefly for the number of pretty children with which she gladdened the heart of her lord, and supplied perpetual materials to one of the most pertinacious of court gossips, who devoted a large portion of his life to chronicling her confinements and her christenings.‡

The possession by Raleigh of resources equal to the chartering, equipping, and furnishing of two ships, provisioned for a six or eight months' voyage, proved that he had benefited largely by Elizabeth's liberality. Another event which occurred at this time shows that he was diligently taking steps towards anchoring his interests in the soil, so that he might at the same time be deriving revenue from land and deep. Sir Francis Englefield, a Catholic, after-

* 'Stradling Correspondence,' p. 23. † Ibid. p. 29.
‡ Rowland White, 'Sidney Papers,' *passim*.

wards attainted, had, apparently with licence, passed into Spain, leaving his estates in England under the management of Lady Englefield. He seems, however, to have been desirous of disposing piecemeal of his lands and manors, either with a view of settling in Spain, or else in order, while he stayed at the court of the Escorial, to make a figure among Philip's nobles.

Raleigh's law-business and financial matters were at that time transacted by Robert Maule, doubtless a solicitor, who learning that one of Englefield's manors, bringing in a hundred a year, was for sale, sent a man into Spain, by the command or with the authority of his employer, to negotiate for the purchase of the estate. This agent, named John Frost, who had lived from boyhood in the service of the Englefields, proceeded to Spain, executed his commission, and, returning to England, was immediately after his arrival, in July, apprehended as a popish spy at Plymouth.* Our relations with the Spanish monarchy were then assuming a very peculiar character: preparations for putting the Armada to sea were in full progress; vast galleys and galleons were collected in the harbours of Spain and Portugal, mariners and soldiers were brought together, and though the design of Philip remained unknown, the formidable blow he meditated was generally expected to be struck at England. When any other than merchants, therefore, visited Spain, it was suspected to be for no good, and Frost, supposed to be a Papist, was looked upon as a dangerous person. When brought before the magistrates, however, after an incarceration of some days, the fact came to light that he had passed the seas on business, between Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Englefield. On being pressed, he said the business respected the purchase of a manor, the name of which he had been commanded to keep secret, and accordingly refused to disclose. All connection between Protestants and refugees, or wandering Catholics, was held to be

* Frost to Lady Englefield, August 1st, 1584. State Paper Office.

perilous, so that much importance was attached to the revelation of Frost, who was sent back to gaol in Saltash, where he was watched day and night by a constable, while a letter was despatched to Raleigh at court, to inquire into the truth or falsehood of the man's statement. The messenger intrusted with this missive loitered so long on the way that the magistrates, Carew and Edgecombe,* Raleigh's own relatives, fearing lest their loyalty should be called in question, wrote to Walsingham, inclosing Frost's examination, and excusing the delay that had taken place through the remissness of the messenger, adding, they doubted not Raleigh was "her Majesty's most true and faithful servant." Frost, who acknowledged her Majesty's supremacy, and to ward off persecution went to hear prayer and preaching in the Protestant Church, finding his imprisonment likely to be protracted, wrote at length to Lady Englefield, as well as to Robert Maule, through whose interference he was probably set at liberty. Five years later Englefield's estates were confiscated and seized by the crown, when in all likelihood Raleigh obtained a share of them by royal gift.

Synchronous with this transaction a suit was in progress between Lady Gilbert, the widow of Sir Humphrey, and the Lord Treasurer's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby. Walsingham, it appears, took part with the lady, and incensed the Queen against Hoby, who in consequence was in disgrace for some years. To the testimony of a man so circumstanced we cannot yield implicit credence, but according to his views Walsingham, who had been the staunch friend of Gilbert, during life preserved the same kindly feeling for his widow, and was indeed so partial that Hoby assured his uncle Burleigh he would rather abide by the judgment of Raleigh, though his adversary's brother-in-law.† It lessens our esteem for Lady Gilbert to learn that, after the great navi-

* Joint letter to Walsingham, August 3rd, 1584. State Paper Office.

† Sir Edward Hoby to Burleigh, November 13th, 1584. State Paper Office.

gator's death, she entered into second nuptials, in spite of her large family of children, and that, too, with a man who, instead of watching carefully over her possessions, had to be restrained by law from making spoil of them altogether.

We left Amadas and Barlow pursuing, in the spring of this year, their voyage of discovery.* Barlow describes the incidents of the voyage with ability and enthusiasm. They were among the Canary Islands in May, and a month later had reached the West Indies, which they speedily left, with crews already attacked by sickness. Proceeding northwards, along the coasts of Florida and Carolina, they enjoyed, while yet beyond sight of land, "Sabæan odours from the spicy shores," not indeed of Araby the blest, but of a far richer and lovelier land, where the grape in "Bacchanal profusion reels to earth," and cedars loftier than those of Lebanon wave along the breezy heights. Here they first came in contact with the Red Men, among whom they found numerous pretty women and fair children, with auburn and chestnut locks. After a short but friendly intercourse, Raleigh's officers quitted the shores of the New World, and returned in September to England, bringing along with them two natives, and a magnificent pearl, which they presented to the lord-proprietor. To enter into minute details would be to invade a field so ably and honourably cultivated by the historians of America, who speak affectionately of Raleigh as the remote father of their republic, in which two cities have been erected as monuments to his memory.

Raleigh laid before Elizabeth the narrative drawn up by Barlow: in the December following his patent was confirmed and enlarged; and in the enthusiasm excited by the greatness of his discovery, the honour of knighthood appears to have been conferred upon him, since, on the 24th of February, 1585, we find him for the first time styled Sir Walter Raleigh.†

* Hakluyt, iii. 301.

† In Burleigh's orders for the musters of counties, where he is directed to report on the force of the Stannaries. MS. State Paper Office.

The usual method of enriching favourites was now resorted to: instead of taking money from the Exchequer and bestowing it as a direct gift, the sovereign practically conceded to one of her subjects a portion of her sovereignty, enabling him by patent to levy taxes on particular classes of the population. To Raleigh was awarded the privilege of licensing ale-houses, and permitting the sale of wine throughout the kingdom, the city of London excepted. Each vintner was to pay yearly into Raleigh's treasury the sum of one pound, consequently, as the vintners amounted to many thousands, he came at once into the possession of a princely revenue, which enabled him to appear on gala days at court, sparkling from head to foot with jewels; and to build, man, and equip ships which, formed into fleets, ploughed the ocean like those of a king.

Legislators have always been haunted by a desire to regulate other people's morality, to decide when or where they may drink beer or wine, look at statues or pictures, and solace themselves with other enjoyments. The grave and reverend seniors of Elizabeth's parliament were especially addicted to this sort of ethical furor which betrayed them into never-ending hostilities with tippling and vagrancy. Raleigh's wine-patent, in whatever light he himself might view it, was looked upon as a grievance by the dispensers of good cheer. Folks who drink, and folks who sell drink, are apt to regard everything that restricts their pleasure or profit with scant approbation, as Raleigh must have learned from the murmurs of bystanders while passing in and out of the Mermaid. The following fragment affords a glimpse of public opinion on the favourites of monopoly.

"It is desired that all former licenses granted within this realm be revoked, and tipplers' houses be placed under strict surveillance of the justices of the peace, the great and unnecessary waste of grain and victual will be thus qualified, the common receptacles of thieves and stolen goods will be diminished, and the ordinary concourse of rogues,

vagabonds, and beggars utterly extinguished. The objections against the same answered:—It is said that it will prove a great exaction upon the inferior subjects, being for the most part of the meanest sort that are licensed to keep tippling-houses; and for example therein, the exacting grant of wines to Sir Walter Raleigh is alleged."*

Another illustration of our forefathers' dislike of monopoly soon presented itself. The doctors, tutors, and undergraduates of Cambridge, considering themselves privileged by ancient usage to regulate their own tippling, fiercely resented the attempt of the royal favourite to license a vintner within their borders. They were probably right, because hard study needing much refreshment, it was surely for them to determine when and how much they would drink. Raleigh, on the other hand, thinking himself authorized to station one of his army of vintners among the doctors to deal forth to them sack and tent, the university took up the cudgels for unlicensed drinking, and Baxter, Raleigh's delegate, was thrown into prison. On the supposition that *ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes emollit mores nec sinit esse feros*, Raleigh addressed the learned gentlemen, endeavouring to bring them by authority and logic to reason. In vain—they were stiff-necked, and would not even deign to reply to her Majesty's gallant favourite. Once and again did he repeat his summons to the polished theologians; but turning a deaf ear to his arguments, they invoked the protection of the law, which gave ultimately a decision in their favour.†

* MS. State Paper Office; Reasons for restricting the number of alehouses, 1585. Cf. Grant to Raleigh by the Queen, August 9th, 1585.

† See Burleigh to Dr Norgate, July 26th, 1585, in Oldys, p. 57.

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS PERILOUS ELEVATION AT COURT.

WHATEVER the amount of Raleigh's wealth may now have been, it fell very far short of his ambition: the words by which he expressed his contempt of his employment in Ireland he might have repeated still, namely, that he scorned to be an opulent and effeminate courtier "as much as to keep sheep."

His American grant filled him with hopes, the vastness of which he was careful never to reveal: though they again and again urged him to lavish his revenues on colonizing enterprises never destined to bear fruit. With all the power of his intellect and acute insight into the nature of things, he yet found it impossible to foresee to what an extent he should become, by the steps he was then taking, the benefactor of the human race; how many millions, through generation after generation, should owe to him their daily food, so that next, after the inventor of corn, he should most deserve the blessings of his species.

To the health and pleasure of mankind he was likewise about to contribute largely by the introduction into Europe of that article the mere duty upon which during the year in which I write contributes nearly seven millions sterling to the revenues of his country, while its use constitutes the solace of all classes, from the prince to the hodman. If Great Britain, therefore, should ever think of repaying with a statue the debt of gratitude it owes to Raleigh, there should

be placed on the lofty brow a wreath composed of the tobacco-leaf and the potato-flower.

Our faults being as much a part of ourselves as our virtues, Raleigh could not, while he lived, repress the exhibition of those qualities which transformed vulgar envy into hounding malice, and frequently made him the most unpopular man in England, though the greatness of his design secured him coadjutors. On the 9th of April, 1585, the first regular colony left England for that part of America which, in honour of Elizabeth, had been called Virginia. The little fleet, consisting of seven ships, under the command of Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville,* took out a hundred and eight settlers, with droves of cattle to be let loose and acclimated in the colony, the seeds and seedlings of fruit-trees to be planted that they might impress an English character on the landscape, together with English vegetables and plants to stock the kitchen-gardens. There were other seeds, however, on board not so well calculated to insure success, I mean the seeds of discord between the fiery Grenville, and Ralph Lane, the Governor of the colony.

All histories of England and America are full of what followed. Lane and his subordinates were wholly unfit to commence the peopling of a new country. Having no women with them to impart to their dwellings the sanctity of home, and lay the foundation of families,† they at once degenerated into a horde of adventurers eager for gold, and not over-scrupulous respecting the means of obtaining it;

* Richard Butler, to whose deposition I have already referred, gives a rather long account of this voyage, observing that Grenville in his seven ships had seven or eight hundred men, soldiers, and sailors. After describing their proceedings in Virginia, he relates that some of Grenville's consorts captured on their return a Spanish ship laden with gold, silver, and pearls. Declaracion, ut supra.

† Richard Butler, however, who is somewhat confused about numbers, says that Grenville left in Virginia a hundred and forty men and ten English women, with provisions, artillery, small arms, and ammunition for their defence, after which he departed for England, and Butler with him. Declaracion, ut supra.

accordingly, the pleasing amity which had existed between the first English settlers and the Red Men quickly gave place to suspicion, treachery, and hostility, so that the process immediately began which will have its completion in the entire extirpation of the aborigines.

Losing sight for the moment, however, of such considerations, we may permit our fancy to be charmed by the fresh beauty of that noble land which our countrymen were afterwards to traverse with rapture, or water with their tears and blood. There is an epic majesty in the ideas suggested by their rude description of the vine-clad shores, the cedar-shaded hills, the level and boundless savannahs, the broad, placid rivers, the flights of white cranes, the tall maize, the shrubs dropping medicinal gums, the mighty forests—above all, multitudes of bold free savages, who now smoked peacefully under the shade of the locust-trees, and now swung their red tomahawks on the field of strife.

Hariot, whose story is closely linked with that of Raleigh, from the dawn of these colonial enterprises to the latest colloquies in the Bloody Tower, took, in Virginia, to the smoking of that tobacco, the numerous virtues of which he celebrates; and on his return to England infected the lord-proprietor with his newly-acquired taste. Pipes, shag, and tankards of ale were consequently familiar to Raleigh's apartments in the palace, and led to several comic incidents which the newsmongers of the time industriously circulated. When the Red Man indulged in this luxury, they inhaled the intoxicating fumes through pipes made of clay, for which Raleigh substituted pipes of silver, while our rustic countrymen, when the practice spread, could devise nothing better than a split walnut shell, into which they inserted a straw.*

One day, Raleigh intending to enjoy in his library the new outlandish luxury, sent a servant for a tankard of ale, and then sat down to his pipe. When the man returned,

* Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii. 512.

observing his master enveloped in smoke, he threw the ale over him, and then, in the greatest terror, ran down-stairs, shouting as he went that Sir Walter was on fire.*

Sometimes we find the great Tudor Queen sitting familiarly beside her favourite while he smoked, chatting, laughing, and laying wagers. Once she objected to him that, with all his ingenuity, he could not tell the weight of the smoke. "Your Majesty must excuse me," replied Raleigh, "for the thing is quite easy." Elizabeth was incredulous, and laid a bet that he could not do what he said. "Your Majesty shall be the judge," he answered, and sending for a small quantity of tobacco, and weighing it in her presence, he put it into his silver pipe, which had probably a capacious bowl, and went on smoking till the whole was consumed, then, placing the ashes in the scales and weighing them, he pointed out to Elizabeth that the difference indicated the weight of the smoke. The Queen laughingly paid the money, saying, in allusion to the alchemists, that she had heard of many who turned their gold into smoke, but till then never knew any one who could turn smoke into gold. From the date of that memorable wager, the use of tobacco gained ground in England, so that it may now almost be said to perfume the whole island from John-o'-Groats to the Land's End.

Through the story of Raleigh's subsequent attempts to realize his grand scheme of colonization it is unnecessary to conduct the reader: for long years he persisted in the endeavour to achieve, with the fortune of a subject, what demanded the revenues of an emperor; and at last, in despair, made over his rights to a joint-stock company. Down to the time of Southey there were those who persevered in

* Bowles in his notes on Pope, viii. 83, relates the following anecdote of an old inn at Henstridge, a village about three miles from Sherbourne on the great western road. While tobacco was little known in that part of the country, a strange gentleman smoking at the inn excited much alarm among the rustics, who suspected him of having dealings with the devil, or to be the devil himself.

accusing him of being wanting both in liberality and humanity towards the colonists whom he induced to emigrate to the New World; but unprejudiced research * has proved all those accusations to be groundless, since from the beginning of his undertaking to its close Raleigh exhausted the resources both of his invention and of his purse to promote the interests and alleviate the misfortunes of those who had confided in him. To insist any longer on such points would be to gild refined gold, since we may be all but certain that no one will ever again be found to attempt the revival of the exploded calumnies.

From this time to the great act of justice at Fotheringay all Europe was agitated by intrigues and counter-intrigues for and against Mary Stuart. On her side ranged the whole Catholic world, which rightly identified her cause with that of wafers,† tapers, and surplices, to bring about the triumph of which thousands were ready to undergo martyrdom; while all friends to religious liberty, all who respected the sanctity of the domestic hearth, all who could reason logically, or who had made any proficiency in true philosophy, were for Elizabeth. The two women, in fact, symbolized the antagonistic principles of stagnation and progress.

If the contending parties could have kept clear of bloodshed the drama then enacting would have been pre-eminently comic, with its disguises and subterfuges, its over-

* See Napier, article on Raleigh, in the 'Edinburgh Review,' No. 143.

† A curious anecdote is related by the Venetian ambassador, apropos of wafer-worship. During his stay in Paris, he says, while a priest was celebrating mass in the church of St François, a man started to his feet, seized the wafer (or as he expresses it, il corpo di nostro Signor) from the priest's hands, and running with it about the church, at length dashed it disdainfully to the ground, exclaiming that none but fools would worship a bit of bread. Instantly the whole church was in an uproar, the congregation shouting and rushing upon the man, who might have fared very badly but that the gensd'armes seized and hurried him to prison. Considering the temper of the times, the story might have been expected to terminate with an *auto-da-fe*; but as the offender had powerful friends among the lawyers, he seems to have escaped with a short imprisonment, December 8th, 1586. Venetian Archives.

reachings, its hypocrisies, its sudden turns of fortune, its ludicrous discoveries. Then, as now, the allurements of the Vatican proved too potent for many among the clergy, who deserted their parochial duties and peaceful rectories to hustle with crawling and half-crazy friars in the purlieus of St Peter's. When they had imbibed a sufficient quantity of intoxicating superstition, they took with more or less zeal and activity to the work of conversion, which, according to the tendencies of the workman, assumed various shapes, sometimes developing itself in printed libels, sometimes in the diffusion of secret calumnies and incentives to regicide, sometimes bordering on the tricks of the Merry-Andrew. The vicar, for example, of Tarbeck, in Worcestershire, having become a Franciscan, returned to edify his former flock apparalled in "a cloak of rat's colour, lined with green baize, the cape of tufted taffeta, red and blue, his gerkin and gascoyns of the colour of his cloak, his doublet white, and the stockings of his hose of a bluish or murrey colour."* In this rare costume the transformed Lessman could hardly fail to rouse the spirit of merriment in the rustics of Worcestershire.

Unfortunately the Franciscans and Jesuits often concealed beneath their mountebank costume the most sanguinary purposes. Words exercise over our minds a strange power; actions which, described by certain syllables, would excite our abhorrence, may often, when represented by other syllables, be made to appear, not only justifiable, but holy. Even in the sixteenth century, to kill a woman was murder, but to take off a hateful, persecuting, heretical tyrant, was assumed to be an act pleasing to God. Hence the prolific spawn of would-be assassins that crossed the Channel from Rome to make away with Elizabeth. It is true that when they reached the scene of their pious enterprise, and witnessed the enthusiastic affection by which, as by a wall, the

* Substance of examinations, &c., August 10th, 1582. State Paper Office.

English queen was encircled, their valour generally shrivelled into babbling, which, nevertheless, in several instances brought them to the gallows.

Whatever might be the danger that threatened her from bowl or dagger, Elizabeth still continued her devotion to pleasure with one favourite after another. Their jealousies, however, often exercised her talent for diplomacy, and gave rise to much correspondence, many fragments of which still remain. We have already seen how the rise of Raleigh disturbed the peace of Sir Christopher Hatton, and betrayed him into the employment of ludicrous contrivances for regaining the affection of his capricious mistress. Years went on, and the captain of Irish Horse still maintained his place at court, outshining the noblest of the Queen's wooers, and while he throve in love, thriving still more in lordships and manors. In the spring of 1585, just before the departure of the Virginian colony, we catch one glimpse more of Hatton's sentimental troubles. His old friend Henage was still potent about Elizabeth, providing for her amusement, and conducting her amours. By his aid it was that Hatton again attempted to rekindle Elizabeth's passion by a present of bracelets with a true-love knot and a letter. At the sight of these tokens, affecting to wake as from a trance, she inquired into the cause of the sender's absence, when Henage informed her that Sir Christopher had now no place at court in which to rest, his apartments having been assigned by the Lord Chamberlain to Sir Walter Raleigh. Feigning much indignation, though no such change could have taken place without her cognizance, she called Raleigh a knave, and abused the Lord Chamberlain in strong terms. In giving an account of this affair to Hatton, Henage says: "The Queen used great bitterness of speech towards Raleigh, saying that 'she had rather see him hanged than equal him with you, or *that the world should think she did so.*'" The writer then alludes in pretty plain terms to the nature of the connection between Elizabeth and Hatton,

which at times she scarcely affected to disguise. "Her Highness saith you are a knave for sending her such a thing, and of that price which you know she will not send back again; that is the knot she most loves, and she thinks cannot be undone." *

In about a month from this time we find this same Heneage writing with Raleigh a joint letter to Walsingham on an exceedingly curious business. One of the features of the times was the liability of Europeans to be taken and kept in captivity by the Barbary corsairs, who spread their ravages from Sicily to the Azores, and from Algeria to the shores of Wales and Devonshire.

In 1581, two Welshmen, Peter Williams and Thomas Powell, were captives in Barbary, and appealed to the affection of their relatives at home to effect their ransom. The Muslims of Northern Africa, prototypes of the Neapolitan brigands, chiefly made men prisoners on speculation; the amount of ransom demanded for an ordinary captive appears to have been about eighty-five pounds sterling—at least this was the sum at which Thomas Powell was valued. Through the intervention of Symcotts, a merchant trading to the Mediterranean, Thomas conveyed an account of his whereabouts to his brother Morgan, in Wales, by whom steps were taken towards his deliverance; the machinery was somewhat intricate, and needs not to be described here; but the circumstances which brought the matter before the Court of Common Pleas, where the case was decided by Raleigh and Heneage, the judges themselves shall explain. The business was perplexing, as most law business is; but after toiling through its mazes the two courtiers will be allowed, I think, to have made a just decision. "When the money," they say, "was sent up to London, one Nicholas Jones attached the same as belonging to John Symcotts, deceased, alleging that because the captive was redeemed by John Symcotts' appointment, though out of

* Nicholas, 'Life of Hatton,' p. 415.

his brother William Symcotts' goods and bonds, made unto John before his departing England by the sureties aforesaid, that therefore this money was due unto John deceased, and John being indebted to Jones Jones, attached the same, and Jones being indebted to the Lord Mayor, paid it to him." William Symcotts, however, with whose property the captive had been ransomed, brought an action against the Lord Mayor, and gained his suit with ten pounds costs.*

Philip of Spain, to whom Mary Stuart had secretly made over her fancied rights to the English throne, now urged forward with double vigour his naval and military preparations, upon which the Netherlands, not doubting that a great blow was to be struck at them, demanded aid of England,† with whose interests they felt their own to be identified. The assistance asked was promised, and Leicester appointed to the command of the English forces, took at once the necessary steps for assembling and organizing an army. Elizabeth, however, who had hastily consented to his departure, without consulting her feelings, at the prospect of losing her long-tried favourite, felt her old love revive, and ordered all warlike preparations to be stayed. Walsingham's letter,‡ by which her will was signified, reached Leicester in bed at one o'clock in the morning, September 27th. In his reply, written immediately on receipt of the Queen's commands, and while yet ignorant of her motives, he complained bitterly; his English army, he said, eager to be engaged with the Spaniards, were fretting and secretly chiding his delay, while all Europe would censure his apparent fickleness. Acquainted with the Queen's multiplied attachments, Leicester might well be at a loss to conjecture why she stayed him now, and to solve the enigma, proceeded at once to court. There he found her love-sick and cling-

* Joint letter of Heneage and Raleigh to the Council, May 31st, 1585. State Paper Office.

† See Mr Bruce's excellent 'Introduction to the Leicester Papers,' p. 10.

‡ 'Harleian' MSS. 285, fol. 133.

ing as of old, doubting perhaps the sincerity of her new lover, and if not, scarcely regarding him as an equivalent for the object of her youthful affection. The letter in which these facts are revealed is perhaps one of the most curious belonging to Elizabeth's story:—

"I find her Majesty," says the Earl, "very desirous to stay me. She makes the cause only the doubtfulness of her own self, by reason of her often disease taking her of late, and this last night worst of all. She used very pitiful words to me: she shall not live and would not have me from her. You can consider what manner of persuasions these must be to me from her, and therefore I would not say much for any matter, but did comfort her as much as I could; only I did let her know how far I had gone in preparations. I do think for all this, if she be well to-night, she will let me go, for she would not have me speak of it to anybody. Thus much I thought good to let you know, and pray you to send my wife word in the morning, that I cannot come before Friday to London. God keep you. Haste this—Tuesday, seven o'clock.

"R. Leicester."*

Awaking from her love-trance, Elizabeth perceived the necessity of preferring public considerations to private feeling, and suffered Leicester to leave her.

With his proceedings in the Low Countries I have no concern, except to observe that when he needed a body of sappers and miners, he requested his friend Raleigh to raise for him, in his government of Cornwall, a hundred men. To the same friend he had left at his departure the task of keeping him alive in the Queen's remembrance, that is, of defending him from the machinations of Burleigh and his partisans. Raleigh's connection with Leicester and Sidney exposed him to much ill-will at court, where various schemes

* September 29th, true date. In the calendar the date given erroneously is September 21st, 1585.

were organized for undermining him with the Queen and the Earl. Sufficient materials have not yet been discovered to enable us to follow the subtle course of intrigue pursued by the Cecil faction; but when Elizabeth's anger burst forth against her lieutenant in the Netherlands, both Burleigh and Walsingham laboured to create in his mind the belief that the storm had been raised against him chiefly by Raleigh.* But if surrounded by crafty enemies and false friends, Leicester seemed to lend an ear to this calumny, it was but for a moment; discovering what was in progress, Raleigh wrote him a letter, so frank, cordial, and explicit, that the suspicions which had been artfully awakened in Leicester's mind were at once removed. Had the letter failed, the steps taken by Elizabeth would have been decisive: when appealed to by Raleigh, she ordered Walsingham, one of the authors of the calumny, to inform Leicester that instead of inflaming her anger as had been supposed, Raleigh had exerted himself more than any other person living to serve the Earl by assuaging her indignation. After this Burleigh and Walsingham could do no other than acknowledge themselves to have been in error.

Leicester's government of the Netherlands proved, it is well known, of little advantage to that country, or to his own reputation. Among the causes of his ill success may be reckoned the presence in his camp of Catholic traitors like Christopher Blount, who betrayed his designs to the enemy. It may also be inferred that Blount † had already corrupted the Earl's countess, whose eagerness to queen it in the Netherlands may have been secretly prompted by the desire to be near her paramour and future husband.

Blount was a Papist, who, like most other persons of the same sect, favoured Mary Stuart, and acted the traitor towards Elizabeth. In Holland he was one of those who,

* See Mr Bruce's 'Introduction to the Leicester Papers,' *passim*.

† Morgan to Queen of Scots, March 31st, and April, 1586. State Paper Office.

espousing secretly the cause of Spain, laboured to obstruct the policy of the English commander, and to betray into the hands of the enemy the country they had ostensibly gone over to defend. One of the Stuart agents, writing from Paris, says:—"I know Blount's mind and confidence he hath in me, more than in most men living, having been his friend in prosperity and greatest distress. He hath some charge and interest where he is, and his meaning is for the service of God and the advantage of the King of Spain, to further the delivery of some notable towns in Holland and Zealand to the King of Spain and his ministers, wherein, nevertheless, he desireth to proceed by my poor advice and labours himself, being now in a notable place to do great service to all Christendom, by aiding the expulsion of heretics that usurp and invade the possessions of his Majesty Catholic."*

Returning, however, to Raleigh and the court, we find that Elizabeth's fickleness and frailty gave rise, in the spring of 1586, to fresh scandals. Sir Charles Blount, afterwards Lord Mountjoy and Earl of Devonshire, coming at this time to court, was taken immediately into favour, to the great annoyance of Raleigh, who could not behold otherwise than with deep regret the weakness of a mistress whom, if he could not love, he at least desired to respect. In one sense he loved Elizabeth then and always—that is, he regarded her with unswerving friendship, and cherished her reputation more sedulously than his own. It was consequently with much grief that he witnessed the reckless levity with which she laid herself open to animadversion. Cherelles, the French envoy, writing at this time to Elizabeth's rival, says:—

"I believe your Majesty is aware that the Queen of England has for four or five years greatly favoured Sir Walter Raleigh, as in fact she still does; but within the last few days there has arisen between them a dissension

* Paget to Mary Stuart, 1586. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

which occasions much grief to them both. The cause is said to be the distinguished partiality which her Majesty has for some months evinced for a gentleman named Blount, brother to the Lord Mountjoy."*

The plots and intrigues of Spenser's Duessa, the Queen of Scots and her partisans, no further concern my narrative than as they touched the fortunes of Raleigh. Towards the close of summer, 1586, they culminated in the Babington Conspiracy, the twofold object of which was the murder of Elizabeth and the elevation of Mary to the throne. Babington, though an excellent theoretical assassin, was little qualified by nature to face the consequences resulting from the failure of his schemes. To the woman at whose breast he had just held the dagger, he crawlingly appealed, through Raleigh, as soon as Walsingham's providence had paralyzed his efforts, offering to pay a liberal price for the sparing of his life. In an agitated and scarcely legible hand he thus expresses his desires to a friend:—

"Good cousin,—speak unto Mr Flower, for I wrote unto him yesterday: if he received my letter, I know not but for that . . . . told me that he spake with him yesterday, and delivered unto you a letter that I sent unto my Lord-treasurer, and a note that I sent unto you, and he told me that he had moved Mr Raleigh for me, and promised a thousand pounds if he would get my pardon hereby. I could promise to pay so much, for I have friends could disburse it for me. Good cousin, speak in my behalf, and move some one (of the under-chamberlains, I think) in the matter, and let him tell her Majesty I can do her Majesty more service . . . . she would . . . . my fault. Good cousin, deal for me, or if you will not, speak with the . . . . and he will do anything for me, and deliver him this note; and bid him tell Mr Flower that with respect to the serving I can

* Letter to Mary Stuart, March 23rd, 1586. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

do for her Majesty, I desire to speak to her Majesty."*

At length the necessity of Mary's execution became evident: while she continued to live, Elizabeth could never hope to be safe from the stiletto, or the nation to feel secure from the rekindling of Smithfield fires. One Catholic Mary, not a whit more bloody, had roasted Protestants by hundreds, and every member of the new religion who felt within him strong zeal for his faith was profoundly conscious that exactly in proportion to that zeal would be his danger in the event of Mary Stuart's accession. In this widely-spread feeling and conviction we discover the true key to the catastrophe of Fotheringay. Everybody knew that the gloomy and vindictive master of the Escorial, to whom the Queen of Scots had made over her claims, to press which he was then engaged in formidable preparations, would scarcely prove a more humane successor to the Tudor than the Stuart herself. Accordingly, the nation's only hope appeared to lie in the preservation of Elizabeth; and this, as far as depended on human policy and foresight, it was resolved to insure. That Raleigh approved of the execution of the Queen of Scots there can be little doubt, though we find no proof of it in the records of the time. His attachment to Elizabeth left him in fact no choice, for when he saw that the safety of the two queens would soon become impossible, he could not be expected to hesitate.

* The real date of this letter must be September 19th, 1586, but an endorsement in a modern hand makes the date February 28th of that year —a palpable error. 'Scottish Papers.' State Paper Office.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND PREPARES FOR HER GREAT CONFLICT WITH SPAIN.

In Raleigh's career of storm and adventure we now enter upon a period possessing the deepest interest, yet provokingly irritating, on account of the uncertain light which the records of the time throw upon it. There was then in preparation one of the most portentous enterprises known to history, which aimed not only at the enslavement of England, but at the stamping out of that spirit of religious and political liberty of which England was then the chief home. On the world's stage the battle has often been fought between excessive opulence and rude poverty; and sooner or later with the same result. In old Greece, effeminate civilization was overwhelmed by the barbarian energy of Macedon: fierce savages from the North extinguished the polished but corrupt empire of Rome; and in the sixteenth century the colossal fabric of the Spanish monarchy, resting its basis on two hemispheres, was irremediably shattered by the intrepid barbarism of Elizabeth and her subjects.

Among those who contributed to bring about this catastrophe none was greater than Raleigh, who combated against the instruments of Philip's power in France, in the Netherlands, in Ireland, in the North Atlantic, in the West Indies, and now in the narrow seas. In saying that none of Spain's enemies was greater than he, I claim for him no more than will, I think, be readily conceded; yet when we look among

the documents of the period for precise and positive information, we are rather met by a great surge of public opinion, and dim and indefinite rumour, than by facts and proofs. His influence was everywhere —clear evidence of it nowhere. In contemporary annals it is felt rather than perceived. The clients of two factions, between them all-powerful at court, shrank from emblazoning the deeds or dwelling upon the genius of Raleigh, who stood outside the pale of both those factions which courted his co-operation, yet dreaded his near approach, and therefore kept him as far as possible aloof.

To exercise predominance in this country several conditions have always been needed: to be upheld by family connections—to possess sway in the House of Commons—to enjoy the commanding influence of great wealth—to be praised by poets and pamphleteers formerly as by the press now. Familiar with these truths, Raleigh had recourse to most of the means within his reach to create for himself a following in the realm: his family connections were elevated and powerful, including the Dudleys, the Howards, the Sidneys, the Herberts, the Thynnes, the Talbots, with several branches of the Boleyn stock; his eloquence and political wisdom secured to him a high position in Parliament; his affable and courteous manners and gentle patronage enlisted the sympathies of authors; but all these helps would, he knew, prove powerless unless he could at the same time hold firmly in his grasp that golden sceptre which exercises supreme control over mankind.

It was in this conviction that originated Raleigh's indefatigable exertions in pursuit of wealth. In accordance with the manners of the times, and the example set by Clifford, Hawkins, Drake, Frobisher, and others, he declared a private war against Spain, and fitted out at his own cost, or in conjunction with others, naval armaments, small or great according to circumstances, which ploughed the ocean in search of prizes. Spain's immense commerce extending its operations eastwards to India, China, and

Japan; westwards to the whole of America, from Florida to the straits of Magellan, supplied ample materials for the enrichment of a resolute enemy, and Raleigh was perhaps only second to Drake in the amount of opulence derived from the plunder of it.

One example of Raleigh's maritime enterprises may deserve to be introduced at some length. Minute exactness as to dates can hardly be looked for in such relations; but at some date anterior to that of the Panama expedition, Butler, who spent most of his life in Raleigh's service, was made commander of a privateer, manned and armed for war. Cruizing among the Azores, he fell in with a Spanish vessel of considerable bulk, with which he kept up a running fight for two days, after which the Spaniard, through want of ammunition, struck his colours. The wealth obtained was enormous; for besides the ship's cargo, estimated at more than three hundred thousand ducats, there was on board a multitude of passengers, who were conveying home to Spain large quantities of gold and jewels. Taking possession of all these, they put the owners ashore at Terceira, and then sailed for Plymouth, whence Butler sent word to Raleigh, inviting him to come and take charge of the ship and cargo. The merchandise taken consisted of Brazil-wood, cochineal, hides, and indigo. Of cochineal alone there were three hundred chests, each weighing about a hundred and twenty-five pounds. In addition to the other articles there was one chest two yards in length, and nearly one in height, filled with bars of silver and gold. On Raleigh's arrival at Plymouth, he treated his captain with much kindness, and having made him many presents, caused the contents of the carrack to be conveyed to London by land, being apparently loth to trust them again to the chances of the sea.

In the summer of 1586, Raleigh equipped and sent forth two barks under the command of captains Whiddon and Evesham,* with instructions to cruise about the Azores, and

* Richard Butler, whose relation throws much light on the details of

make capture of all such Spanish merchantmen, or royal argosies as might fall within their reach. Nothing loth, these subordinate buccaneers hastened to the scene of action, and Fortune favouring them, soon rendered themselves masters of more prizes than the small means at their disposal enabled them to convoy to England. In two of the ships they took upon this occasion, were the Governor of San Miguel, and Don Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, whom Philip had sent out to establish a new colony on the straits of Magellan. Whiddon and Evesham returned to England in October, and Sarmiento, while waiting to be ransomed, resided with Raleigh. Between captor and captive there existed no feeling of rancour or hostility; both looked upon what had taken place as a matter of course, and laughed and chatted together like old friends.

As might have been expected, Raleigh sought to profit by the lucky chance to add to the store of knowledge he already possessed respecting the Spanish conquests in the new world, and Sarmiento appears to have experienced no repugnance to gratify his curiosity, probably because he perceived the inutility of all attempts at concealment. While looking one day together over a map of South America, the captive was betrayed into the relation of a curious anecdote. "When I asked him," says Raleigh, "some question about an island in the straits of Magellan, which methought might

Raleigh's buccaneering expeditions, assigns to Arthur Barlow, companion of Amadas, the honour of taking the lead in this voyage. Among the islands of the Azores they captured ten Portuguese and Spanish vessels, some of them laden with sugar, Brazil-wood, hides, silver, gold, pearls, and silk, together with three ships-of-war, in which the celebrated Spanish navigator was made captive. From having been lieutenant on this occasion, Butler was now promoted by Raleigh to the rank of captain, and sent out with a ship under his own command, with which he made prize of three Spanish vessels with cargoes valued at a hundred thousand ducats. The rule for division of the spoil was that Raleigh should take two parts out of three, while the third was divided among the officers and crew. Butler from his own share made presents to several friends, among others to Lord Burleigh's secretary, to whom he gave three boxes of sugar, with pearls, and other valuable and curious articles. MS. Simancas.

have done either benefit or displeasure to his enterprise, he told me merrily that it was to be called the 'Painter's Wife's Island,' saying that whilst the fellow drew that map, his wife, sitting by, desired him to put in one country for her, that she in imagination might have an island of her own."* After remaining four months in England, Sarmiento obtained his liberty, and passed over into France.

Having remained three days in Paris, he resumed his journey; but while traversing Guiana, was made prisoner by the troops of Navarre. News of his capture having been sent to the Spanish embassy in Paris, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who for his guilty practices had been expelled from England, made strenuous representations to Henri III. in favour of Sarmiento. The king expressed his inability to procure the captive's liberation, and it was not until Elizabeth despatched a special envoy to Henri of Navarre that the Spanish admiral was set at liberty. On his return to Spain, he was again honoured with high command in the navy; but while proceeding with a fleet to the southern hemisphere in 1592, he dropped out of sight, and appears no more in history.

It is customary to charge Elizabeth with a niggard parsimony, which paralyzed the efforts of enterprising men, checked improvement, interfered mischievously with the operations of war, and generally obstructed the progress of civilization. Capricious and imprudent she certainly was, sometimes withholding money when it was needed, and determining unwisely respecting the occasion of disbursing it; but towards her favourites at least she was never penurious. Raleigh, beginning life with no property, gradually through her bounty became master of a princely revenue—of manors, castles, lordships, monopolies, palaces, which enabled him to vie in magnificence and splendour with the first nobles in Europe.

Burleigh, in an extremely obscure passage of his work on Elizabeth's reign, alludes to a peculiar source of revenue

* 'History of the World,' Works, iv. 684.

possessed by Raleigh:—"From the 25th of March, 1584, to this day, 25th of March, 1585, Sir Walter Raleigh was answered for his lease of overlengths for one year in London only, £3950 5*s.* 3*d.*, and his rent for all England is but £700." The trade then carried on in undyed broad-cloth was considerable, in spite of the duties exacted from exporters. The length of the piece had been variously fixed by law at different epochs at twenty-eight, twenty-six, and twenty-four yards; all beyond this was called over-lengths, and the customs payable upon it became by patent the property of some favourite.*

Raleigh's honours now seemed likely to keep pace with his opulence; he was made Captain of the Guard, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and Lord-lieutenant of Cornwall. These promotions promised well, yet in obedience to motives, the force of which we can no longer appreciate, Elizabeth withheld from him those higher places and dignities which to her and to all the world it was evident he fiercely coveted. In this treatment of so great a favourite we discover the existence of an influence that she did not consider it prudent to despise: was it that of Walsingham and the Cecils? Or must we suppose that the jealousy even of Leicester himself was at length awakened?

Whatever may have been the agencies secretly at work, Elizabeth, while she bestowed the garter and chancellorship on Hatton, and loaded other inferior persons with places and titles, steadily refused to Raleigh the humblest office in the government, together with any further elevation in rank; and when pressed upon the point, disingenuously replied, that no titles or honours could equal his deserving; yet this was the strongest reason why all the honours at her disposal should have been conferred on him, after which she might have gracefully said, that his merit still exceeded his reward.

* Reasons why Custom ought not to be Paid, &c., January 16th, 1591. State Paper Office.

In palliation of her conduct may be adduced that peculiarity in Raleigh's character which old writers have sometimes noticed,—there was, they say, an awfulness in his manner which daunted those who conversed with him. This may be merely a quaint way of expressing the fact, that through consciousness of intellectual superiority, he was in the habit of setting aside with too little ceremony the judgments of men older than himself and higher in office; it may therefore have been feared that if admitted with loftier titles into the administration, he might either have paralyzed the energies of the ancient ministers, or impelled the whole machine of government in the direction which, however beset by dangers, might promise to square best with his personal ambition. This implies that he inspired in all around him more fear than confidence, and in the existence of that fear we may discover the secret of his misfortunes.

The truth embodied in the adage, that "a favourite has no friends," meets us in every turn of Raleigh's career; all hated him who desired his place, and were not scrupulous respecting the means they made use of to obtain it. One of the most obvious was to pique Elizabeth's pride by suggesting the idea that the favourite's influence overtopped her own. In furtherance of this scheme, Tarleton, the comic actor who then occupied the place allotted to the fool in our older courts, was instigated one day to assail Raleigh while playing at cards with his mistress: alluding to some point in the game, the saucy jester exclaimed, "See how the knave commands the Queen;" upon which Elizabeth raised her head and frowned. Encountering no worse rebuke, Tarleton was emboldened to fly at still higher game, and in language at once impertinent and scurrilous, railed at the Earl of Leicester. His prompter, probably de Vere, now found that his interest was too weak to protect his tool, for Tarleton was expelled the court, and forbidden to appear again in Elizabeth's presence.

Events were then beginning to loom above the horizon which threatened to divert Raleigh's attention from court intrigues and gaieties to more serious business. Spain was slowly taking measures for striking a blow at some rival power, and the prevalent belief was that it would be aimed at England. In this persuasion Elizabeth ordered the muster of the shires, that she might discover with what amount of force her kingdom could withstand the threatened invasion. Her people, though comparatively few in number, were brave as of yore, when they had swept like a hurricane over France, and carried their bills, bows, and lances, along the heights of Andalusia and Castile; so that she felt little misgiving at the prospect before her. Numerous dark prophecies were in circulation among her enemies, and there were those nearer home, and of English blood, who took a very cheerless view of her position. An Englishman of rank, perverted by superstition, and vegetating under its banner abroad, thus wrote to a friend in England:—

"If it be war, I do not think the Catholics in such danger as you write: for a massacre used towards them will be the cause of more cruelty towards the heretics; whereas, by the well treating of them it may procure the heretics more favour. When the day of invasion happeneth, assure yourself there is not the proudest counsellor or minister but will be as glad of the favour of a Catholic gentleman as now the Catholic desireth surety and liberty of his conscience."*

As such convictions were shared by the majority of Catholics at home, who were sometimes unwise enough to give utterance to their opinions, hatred of them and their religion became a predominant sentiment. It was known that they sympathized with Spain, accused their sovereign of heresy, looked upon their Protestant countrymen as imps of perdition, and in the event of success, would not in many cases be averse from consigning them to the faggot or the

* Charles Paget (under the signature of Harris) to Berden, January 31st, 1588. State Paper Office.

rack. No wonder then at the severity with which the laws against recusants were put in force. They were traitors within the Protestant camp, the objects of their allegiance were in Rome and Madrid; Cardinal Allen and Father Parsons, though absent, directed their consciences, over which all the darkness of the Middle Ages brooded heavily, so that, swayed by the combined influence of ignorance and the desire of revenge, they were not merely ready, but eager to murder their Queen and make a holocaust of as many of her subjects as their vengeance might be able to reach.

On the other hand, Elizabeth's Protestant subjects were on fire with zeal and loyalty. No doubt their enthusiasm was strengthened by remembrance of Smithfield, and the echoes of Philip's doings in the Netherlands, where eighteen thousand six hundred Protestants were massacred in six years.* Ministers were oppressed by plans, schemes, and suggestions for defence of the realm — all minds were absorbed by warlike ideas—new engines of destruction were invented, arms were collected and piled up in all convenient places, and a store of those great guns, whose reputation caused them to be coveted throughout Christendom, was cast and planted on commanding points along the shore.†

I have said that in the midst of all this excitement Raleigh was among the foremost in activity, though the record of his services only presents itself at wide intervals, and in distant parts of the realm. Now we find him superintending the fortifications of Portsmouth,‡ now in command of the guard—at one moment he is busy in the Council Chamber, devising with the Lord-treasurer and others general

* Raleigh, 'Preface to History of the World,' Works, ii. 28.

† Up to a late period England had imported gunpowder from Germany; but in 1561, its manufacture was naturalized in England, when ordnance, both of brass and iron, began likewise to be cast. Camden, ii. 388. Shortly after new engines of destruction were invented by Englebert. Address to the Council, 1589. State Paper Office.

‡ September 29th, 1587, two thousand pounds were placed at his disposal to repair the Portsmouth fortifications. State Paper Office.

plans of defence,*—then his presence is signalized at Exeter, or in Cornwall, drawing together, arming, and disciplining the forces of the duchy; the chief proof of his sagacity, however, is the bold scheme, the execution of which, in conjunction with Drake, he strongly advocated, and had his counsel been followed in all its fulness, Philip, from the heights of Lisbon, or Corunna, might have beheld the flames of his own armada and the annihilation of his long-cherished hopes. The plan of Drake and Raleigh was to concentrate the naval power of England in one fleet, which, under experienced leaders, should proceed to Spain, and burn all her armaments in harbour, together with her docks, arsenals, and stores.†

While Elizabeth and her ministers were balancing the merits of conflicting courses of policy, neighbouring princes, enlightened by the Society of Jesus, were organizing plans of assassination to facilitate the operations of war. Publicly, France was at peace with England, yet this did not hinder her mariners from cutting ships out of English harbours, or her king from attempting the murder of the English Queen. Raleigh was robbed by Frenchmen at Dartmouth, Elizabeth was to have been poisoned, or blown up with gunpowder in London; but Henri Trois, while eager to reduce to practice in England the Papal doctrine of regicide, knew not that among his sacerdotal coadjutors there was one who, even then, was leisurely whetting his avenging knife to furnish a commentary on the same doctrine in France.

Undismayed by poisons, stilettoes, or gunpowder, Elizabeth continued her preparations for grappling with Spain: it is true that her forces both by sea and land were small, and brought together but slowly, less however through want of spirit and will than through deficiency of means; the mass of the people were poor, the nobles, who possessed

* March 31st, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Cf. Birch, ii. 45. Drake to Council, March 30th, 1588. State Paper Office.

ample resources, wasted them in profitless magnificence, so that to eke out their revenues they constantly found themselves under the necessity of engaging in trade * or seeking plunder on the ocean; yet now that the day of trial seemed at hand, they betook themselves to their several counties to rouse and direct the martial spirit of the population—Herbert Earl of Pembroke to the maritime counties of Wales, Warwick, Grey, and Mildmay to Essex, Cobham to Kent, the Marquis of Winchester and the Earl of Sussex to Hampshire, while Sir Walter Raleigh repaired westward to discipline and lead to battle the forces of Devonshire and Cornwall.

From what this diligent servant of Elizabeth and the country experienced in the West we may conjecture the financial, mental, and moral condition of the other divisions of England: great reluctance was felt by the inhabitants to trench upon their pecuniary hoards, which they desired to have spared by advances from the Treasury; while the enthusiasm of the Papists, inflamed by the hope of victory for their religion, could scarcely be restrained from breaking forth into open mutiny. Writing to the Lords of the Council, Raleigh frankly describes the state of the shire, and backs with much caution the appeal for financial aid. "I have attended," he says, "the Earl of Bath, and conferred with the deputies of Devon, and the city of Exon for the drawing together of two thousand footmen and two hundred horse, and I find great differences in opinion among them; some are of opinion that this burden will be grievous unto the country, standing at this time void of all traffic, the subsidy not being yet gathered, and the past musters having been very chargeable—Sir John Gilbert, Sir Richard Grenville, and the Earl himself, being more zealous both in religion and her Majesty's service, who have always found a ready disposition in their divisions to bear whatever shall be thought meet for her Majesty's service by her people—are

* Leicester was engaged in the trade of the Levant.

of opinion that the matter will be very feasible. It is most true that the careful usage of their action by the deputies in their several divisions will easily induce the inferior sort to whatever shall be thought necessary for her Majesty's safety and their own defence; but some other of the commission of Devon, in my conscience, before the Lord, being both infected in religion and vehemently malcontent, who, by how much the more they are temperate, by so much the more are dangerous, are secretly of great hindrance of all actions tending to the good of her Majesty, or safety of the present state: these men make doubt that your honour's instructions alone are not sufficient and safe warrant for their discharge: that if any refuse to contribute, they see not by what they should be inforced, with a thousand dilatory cavillations. For my own opinion, under your lordship's correction, if it might notwithstanding stand with her Majesty's liking to bear thereon half of the charge, being great, it would be very consonant to all good policy; and the country, I judge, would willingly defray the rest, which, unless they were ministers of other disposition, will not be so safely and easily brought to effect. I have sent your lordship an estimate of the whole, with which I humbly pray your lordship to acquaint her Majesty, and not otherwise to impart my letter, because I am bold to write my simple opinion unto your lordship, the same being, as the Lord doth judge, without respect or partiality, having vowed my travel and life to her Majesty's service only, and for ever.

"I have written to the deputies of Cornwall I am ready to repair thither with all diligence, to perform the rest of her Majesty's commands, given me in charge by your lordships.

"From Exon, this 21st December, your lordships, to do you all honour and service,

"W. Raleigh." *

"The citizens of Exon as yet refuse to bear such part

* MS. State Paper Office.

as was thought meet by the lieutenants of Devon and the rest."

This letter was accompanied by an inclosure, connected with which there is a curious bit of history. When Conway took to his own house from the public records a number of documents, in order, probably, to study them at leisure, he bundled up Raleigh's inclosure among the rest, and it remained separated from the letter to which it belonged till 1857, when the Conway papers were restored to the Record Office by Wilson Croker.*

When we consider the present population of Devonshire and Cornwall, Raleigh's estimate must strike us with surprise. The body of the shire (Devon) could furnish, with the Stannaries, twelve hundred footmen, and one hundred and thirty-four horsemen, of which number the Stannaries two hundred footmen. The body of the shire, Cornwall, with the Stannaries, to furnish six hundred footmen, and sixty-six horsemen, of which the Stannaries two hundred footmen. The county and city of Exeter to furnish two hundred footmen. All the superior officers, from the general to the treasurer, were to serve without pay; the inferior officers and the men received a liberal allowance:—

	s.	*d.*	
The Sergeant Major	6	0	a-day.
The Provost Marshal	5	0	„
Clerk of the Checks	2	6	„
Captain	4	0	„
Lieutenant	2	0	„
Ensign	1	6	„
Clerk	1	0	„
Drum	1	0	„
Men	0	8	per person.

The pay of the cavalry, both officers and men, was greater, the captains receiving five shillings a-day, and the men one.

* See note to the 'Calendar' by Mr Lemon.

According to usage, this levy was to be called out for sixteen days only, during which the men were allowed each ten pounds of powder at a shilling a pound, half a pound of matches per day at sixpence per pound, and a pound of lead at one penny the pound.*

* Inclosure of Raleigh's letter to Burleigh.

CHAPTER X.

RALEIGH'S SERVICES AGAINST THE ARMADA.

At length the first day of the Great Year dawned upon the fleets of England cruising to and fro along the coast—Howard and Palmer eastward, Drake in the west.

A difference of views existed between the ministers and the men of action; the former inclining to place reliance on diplomacy, the latter putting their trust exclusively in arms.* Aware of these political divergencies, Philip sought to widen them by opening up a delusive prospect of peace,† which might cheer the imaginations of the timid, and relax the energies even of the bold. The contest of propositions and protocols carried on in the Netherlands was protracted by the Spanish government, to insure leisure for completing its own preparations, and create in England the belief that a storm which had been so long in brewing might in the end prove nothing but a light squall.

For a while this policy promised to be successful; the English government slackened in its exertions, paid off a number of mariners, and began to congratulate itself upon the wisdom of its policy. Effingham, however, Papist though he was, never shared in this delusion. Hostility to Burleigh may have imparted additional force to his convictions, for writing to Walsingham he says:—"Pray God we

* Discourse on the Policy to be pursued by England, December 31st, 1587. State Paper Office.

† Council to Drake, April 9th, 1587. State Paper Office.

may not have to curse for this an old greybeard with a white head,"* but whatever may have been his motives, certain it is that he looked upon the Low Country negotiations as a juggle, and anticipated no safety for England but from her courage and her great guns.

The part to be taken by Scotland was regarded with much doubt and uneasiness: scarcely a year had elapsed since her queen had been executed in England, and her king, the son of that queen, might consequently with some reason be suspected of a leaning towards England's enemies.† A league, it was believed, existed between France, Spain, and Scotland, of whose kings Howard said he had made a trinity, in which he never meant to put his trust.‡ True, he afterwards married James's cousin, and was reckoned among the most base and servile of his flatterers; but for the present these facts lay hidden in the womb of futurity. Philip's design was to throw into Scotland a military force, which, being joined by the troops of that country, might effect an invasion of England from the north; while Parma, already on the eve of pushing down his formidable columns towards the coast, should be supplied with ample means of transport to traverse the narrow seas, and march directly upon London.

To accomplish so great an enterprise, Spain had for years been engaged in constructing and equipping an immense fleet, and in organizing a no less formidable army. In the harbours of Cadiz, Lisbon, and Corunna, the several portions of that mighty armament then swung at anchor,§ slowly taking in provisions and naval stores, while the multitudes of soldiers intended for the expedition encamped along the coast, with tents, baggage, and arms, ready for

* Howard to Walsingham, January 27th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† James, however, guided in this instance by true patriotism, offered to aid Elizabeth against the Spaniards. Birch, i. 55.

‡ Howard, *ubi supra*.

§ Vice-Admiral Fenner to Walsingham, March 3rd, 1588. State Paper Office.

embarkation. In Philip's mind the attack upon England was not a mere political undertaking, it was a crusade, a holy war, to be conducted on God's behalf against his most abhorred and sanguinary enemies. In this belief shared all the senoras and senoretas of Spain, who amidst their boleros and fandangos, fluttered their fans, and dreamed with charming complacency of the extirpation of a nation of heretics. Rome's sacerdotal battalions, regular and secular, "white, black, and gray," were likewise in a fever of anticipation, not doubting that the fleets and legions of the most Catholic King would be able to purge the earth of heretics and heresy, and re-establish everywhere the orthodox creed.

A consummation so devoutly to be wished set their fancies on fire, and nerved their arms, more especially in Spanish Flanders, where, to victual the thirty-seven ships of war then lying in the harbour of Dunkirk, and told off for Scotland, the regulars in all their monasteries laboured night and day grinding corn, baking biscuits, and preparing such other necessaries as the rough instruments of Catholicism, destined for the slaughter of heretics, might require. No doubt seems to have been entertained of the Church's triumph, to witness which, worthy John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, formerly Mary Stuart's most active agent, came down to Dunkirk, where in his holy zeal he probably superintended the ovens. There is a vivacity in the enthusiasm of Catholics which, when converts are to be made or heretics to be extirpated, assumes a miraculous character. Cardinal Allen, the austere censor of Elizabeth's morals, likewise drifted coastwards to share in Brother of Ross's gratification; while Father Parsons, secretary to the Society of Jesus, hovered in frantic glee about the purlieus of Parma's camp.*

* Advertisements of preparations at Dunkirk, July 3rd, 1588. State Paper Office. Father Parsons was an apostate from Protestantism, as was also his father, who, having while in the Tower been subjected to torture

In England popular excitement was kept up at blood heat by irregular instalments of news respecting the Armada, which Philip and his subjects denominated the Invincible. Upon its movements, it was believed by many, hinged the fate of England. Spies, made reckless by gold, volunteered to penetrate into the enemy's country, survey the havens of Corunna, Lisbon, Cadiz, and gather correct information about the strength and general condition of the hostile forces. Rumour estimated as follows the troops and mariners to be employed against England :—

Italian troops	8,000
From the Indies	3,000
From Spain	17,000
From Portugal	12,000
From Flanders	25,000
Fresh levies in Italy	12,000
Light horse	1,200
Horses garnished	1,400
Artillery service	1,200
Mariners and sailors	8,921
	89,721

To supply the wants of this multitude provisions had been brought together from sundry quarters :—

	Quintels.—Biscuits.
From Andalusia	27,557
From Malaga	12,000
which, with supplies of biscuits from other places, amounted to	185,557
Bacon and pork from several places	23,000
Wine from four places	26,000 butts.
Fish from three places	19,000 hogsheads.
Beef from three places	11,000 firkins.
Jars of oil from ten places	23,000 jars.

These provisions were intended to be conveyed to England in swift fly-boats, which were to accompany the Armada.

by having needles thrust under his finger-nails, was hung, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn in 1581. Nichols, ' Progresses,' ii. 434.

Raleigh, it will have been seen, had an important part assigned to him in organizing England's power to resist invasion; yet it is only by the aid of recently-discovered documents that we are enabled to form an idea, and that a very imperfect one, of the influence he exerted over the policy of the Government. No man of those times seems to have applied himself more diligently to the study of war, whether by sea or land, to the science and practice of fortification, to the manufacture and use of artillery, or to the military topography of Europe. At the numerous consultations held by the members of the Government on the eve of the great invasion, he appears therefore to have been always present, and to have exercised much sway over their decisions. In a curious paper, bearing date March 31st, 1588, and said to be drawn up by the Lord-treasurer, the Treasurer of the Household, Lord Grey, Sir John Norris, Sir Thomas Leighton, Sir Richard Bingham, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others, the impress of his mind appears on every paragraph. In the preceding December he had reported to Burleigh on the condition of Devonshire and Cornwall, and recommended that the Queen should bear half the expense of arming the population. We here find that his counsel had been adopted, and that in consequence the leading gentlemen in the two counties had volunteered to bring into the field nearly thrice the number of men demanded of them three months before. The paper takes a rapid survey of all the vulnerable points on the coast, from Plymouth to the eastern extremity of Norfolk; shows where the Armada was most likely to put in, where Parma's veterans would probably disembark, and while doing so sketches a sagacious plan of defence. First, everything practicable was to be done to obstruct the landing of the enemy; next, if he should succeed in disembarking either at Plymouth, Portland, or on the Kentish coast, a pitched battle was by all means to be avoided, the country was to be "driven," as the writers express it, so that no pro-

visions should be obtainable by the enemy; he was to be kept on the watch by perpetual alarms, assailed by fleet skirmishers, and bewildered by Parthian strategy, till the Lords-lieutenants of counties should be able to bring together a sufficient force to risk a battle.* In the midst of the danger from without, another from within is glanced at, to which Raleigh, in his letter from Devonshire, had directed the attention of the Lord-treasurer. The disaffected Papists, it was expected, would rise, fire the villages and homesteads of their neighbours, and make whatever efforts they could to facilitate the movements of the invaders. In this case they were at once to be dealt with as traitors, seized, executed, or treated otherwise with such severity as circumstances might seem to demand.

With respect to the defence of the coast, more stress is laid on the presence of a military force well provided with pikes, bills, and artillery, than upon the earthworks and ditches recommended by Ralph Lane,† Raleigh's unsuccessful Virginian governor. Throughout all the counties bordering on the southern coast, scout-masters were appointed with men under them, to collect intelligence, and watch over the guarding and firing of the beacons.‡ In Raleigh's government, especially, against which the storm was first expected to break, all possible precautions were taken to forward tidings to London. With his local deputies he was in constant communication, sometimes in person, sometimes by letter: in the beginning of the month, ren-

* Raleigh, long after the event, carefully considered the value of a country's natural defences, which he thought would never suffice to resist a resolute enemy. 'Hist. of the World,' v. 307. Elsewhere he proves the paramount importance of a fleet which enables its commander to choose his point of descent, to outrun the swiftest armies, and all but to secure victory. Ibid. vi. 98—105.

† See Plan of Lane, April 30th, 1587. State Paper Office.

‡ Note of things to be executed, June 28th, 1585. On training forces and watching beacons, September 1st, 1586. Appointment of Scout-masters and guarders of beacons, October 25th, 1587.

dered memorable by the great conflict, he received from his kinsmen and deputies, Grenville, Godolphin, and Carew, a sketch of the preparations in progress :—

"Our duties remembered—

"*July 8th*, 1588.

"It may please your lordship to understand that, according to several letters received from your lordship and their honours, we have thus proceeded to the performance of the services commanded us. First, concerning the increase of armour for horse and footmen, we have dealt with the best gentlemen, whom we find very willing to increase the proportion of the returns to the uttermost of their power—the rather because they hope it shall not remain to charge them hereafter, save only for the present service; but they can hardly be able to furnish themselves with such speed as is requisite, because there is not armour to be bought here for money. Also we must continue our old suit in excuse of the insufficiency of our horses, the increasement whereof we have made us is, besides the former rate, light horses, 100; armed pikes, 200; muskets, 50; calivers, 50.

"We have also taken order for the providing 2000 men in readiness to make their repair as is expressed in the letters; we have given like exertions for the performance of all former instructions.

"Your loving kinsmen,

"R. Grenville.

"Fra. Godolphin.

"R. Carew."

A thrill passed like an electric shock through the whole south of England when intelligence arrived that the mighty armament was at sea, steering northwards along the shores of Portugal. A small Scottish bark from Lisbon beheld the Armada rounding the point of Galicia, and making by Corunna towards the Bay of Biscay. An impulse of enlightened patriotism hurried the brave Scot towards Eng-

land. Crowding sail, he was soon in the harbour of Dartmouth, whence the mayor forwarded his tidings with all possible speed to London. The leading men of the realm now determined upon the course they were to pursue. To remain on land was to hazard the chance of encountering nothing but the dregs of the tempest, while the first taste of its fury was to be quaffed by those who went forth to meet it on the ocean. Leaving therefore the bands of Cornwall and Devonshire to be headed in fight by his kinsmen, Raleigh, with the approbation doubtless of Elizabeth and her ministers, betook himself to his favourite element, and, with a squadron of his own, posted himself on the coast of Dorsetshire, that he might fly at the flanks of the Armada as it passed up the Sleeve;* while in one of his ships, 'The Roebuck,' Burleigh and his son Robert despatched powder and other ammunition to the royal fleet.†

Encountering obstacle after obstacle, the Armada swung slowly along the ocean, which its galeons and galeases covered thickly for many a league. After the detention of a whole month at Corunna, Medina Sidonia, on the 22nd of July, recommenced his voyage, and in the midst of storms terrible as those of winter, bore northwards. At length the weather cleared up, and on a bright July morning the Armada was descried on the Atlantic, making before a favourable breeze towards the Channel.

A thousand beacon-fires immediately flung from tor and cliff intelligence that the enemy was at hand—all England was at once in motion—from the borders of Scotland to the Devonshire coast, pike and halberd flashed in the July sun, the tramp of cavalry sounded along the highways—tumbril, cart, and waggon, passed hither and thither with ammunition and arms, and the face of the whole island bristled with preparation. The men of Raleigh's Cornish government were they who enjoyed the first glimpse of the Spanish sea-

* Lodge, ii. 385.

† Cecil to Burleigh, July 30th, 1588. State Paper Office.

towers, as they came driving before the wind towards their coast. A more stirring sight was never witnessed. Disposed in the form of a crescent upwards of seven miles in length,* the line of battle swept forwards, its vast sails filled by the west wind, and the muzzles of its great guns peering forth menacingly from the port-holes.

Of what followed no details need here be given—the straggling fight along a hundred miles of coast—the destruction caused by fire-ships in Calais roads—the unexampled hurricane, which, co-operating with the English, reduced the Armada to the condition of a wreck, and sent it floating in fragments far up into the North Sea—the massacres on the coast of Ireland—the melancholy return of Medina Sidonia to Spain—and the sudden and terrible collapse of Philip's power, which after that defeat never revived, but went on dwindling gradually till it ended in the utter humiliation and abasement of the Spanish monarchy.

In the great conflict of 1588, with which this process commenced, Raleigh performed an active though not a very prominent part. It may be assumed that, with other distinguished volunteers, he, at the head of a small squadron of his own, joined the fleet about the 30th of July, and during the next eventful eight or ten days, co-operated in accomplishing the destruction of the Armada; for, as a recognition, rather than as a reward of his services, Elizabeth, on the 9th of August, conferred on him a new and prolific source of revenue in a moiety of the benefit of all penalties and forfeitures for offences committed against the statute of 7th Edward VI., for the sale and retailing of wines, with power to compound with offenders.

The Armada, after its defeat, was blown by a succession of storms into the North Sea, and it was conjectured that all that remained of it would seek refuge in the ports of Denmark† to refit, and take in provisions. Two pinnaces had

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' 1588, ii.

† Palavicino to Walsingham, August 12th, 1588. State Paper Office.

been despatched by Effingham to follow the enemy and observe his course; but in the great storm off the Orkneys they lost sight of him. Raleigh, with his squadron, seems likewise to have hovered on the skirts of the flying foe, and to have shared the opinion of those who considered it practicable to overtake and destroy the remnant of his forces in the havens of our Danish ally. To this end it was proposed to despatch a fleet in pursuit, eight of which should be Queen's ships, twelve the property of private individuals, with twenty well manned and armed from Holland; but, contrary to expectation, Medina Sidonia, when he had reached a very high latitude, turned his prows in a different direction, and sailed for Spain.* A large fragment of the Armada, consisting of eighteen ships, with five thousand men, steered for Ireland, where, on their arrival, it was believed the Catholics would rise, and indeed the report went that the Spanish force had disembarked, and effected a junction with the insurgents.

On the intelligence of the descent upon Ireland, Raleigh, who now commanded a division of the fleet, received orders to hold himself in readiness to pass over with a strong force to the scene of his old exploits, and co-operate with the Lord-deputy in crushing the united efforts of invaders and rebels.† According to the peremptory injunction of Elizabeth, Wales was to furnish for the service, one thousand six hundred men, while Cornwall, Devonshire, Somerset, and other western counties were to send forth their yeomanry and gentlemen in like proportion. To transport these hasty levies to the seat of war, numerous trading-vessels were stayed along the coast; and Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville,‡ was commanded to make speedy preparations for the Irish campaign. But if there was vigour in our gallant

* Lord Henry Seymour to Walsingham, August 31st, 1588. Sir John Gilbert to Walsingham, November 7th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Cf. Note of ships to go with Sir Walter Raleigh, August 28th. Queen to Grenville, September 14th, 1588. State Paper Office.

‡ Queen to Grenville, September 14th, 1588. State Paper Office.

forefathers, there was not always corresponding swiftness. Letters and messengers flew about with rapidity, but the process of conscription went on slowly; so that ere the Welsh contingent, under Captain Jenkins, could be embarked at Milford, or the English contingent, under Grenville, at Plymouth, the axe of the galloglas* and the skene of the kern had reddened the coast of Ireland with Spanish blood, and delivered the Lord-deputy from the necessity of calling for aid from England.

While troops were being slowly raised in the western counties, Raleigh, with his squadron, was out at sea, though the nature of his operations, as well as against whom carried on, remains unknown. That the Government, however, attached the greatest importance to his services, is evident from the fact, that when Elizabeth distributed the Spanish prisoners of rank among her admirals, that they might be enriched by the large sums paid for their ransom, Raleigh received an equal number with Sir Francis Drake.† Throughout the months of September and October the Irish expedition hung in suspense; but in the beginning of the following month,‡ intelligence was received from the Lord-deputy which quieted the apprehensions of the Government, and made it needless for Raleigh to repair to the bloody scene of his achievements under Grey.

* Examinations of Spanish prisoners, September 12th, 1588. State Paper Office.

† Distribution of Spanish prisoners, September 5th, 1588. State Paper Office.

‡ Council to Earl of Bath and Sir Walter Raleigh, November 2nd, 1588. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XI.

HOSTILITY OF ESSEX—VISITS SPENSER ON THE MULLA.

It would be difficult to imagine the flutter of female hearts in Elizabeth's court at Greenwich when Raleigh and the other commanders against the Armada came back from the wars. In spite of his professions to the Queen, it seems more than probable that he had already commenced that wooing of Bessy Throgmorton which three years later exposed her to shame, and sent him to the Tower. Unhappily there then existed no minute court chronicler to give permanence to scandal and enlighten us respecting the achievements of the gallant gentlemen and noble ladies who made love licit or illicit under the patronage of Elizabeth. We are, therefore, left to conjecture the nature of the cause or causes which involved Raleigh in his first quarrel with Essex, who had just been appointed Master of the Horse.

This young nobleman, whose father-in-law, Leicester, had died on the 4th of the previous September, was now twenty-one years of age, and Raleigh thirty-six. There existed nevertheless some rivalry between them, either for love or power. It has been asserted that Leicester brought his son-in-law to court that he might supplant Raleigh in Elizabeth's regards, and thus turn aside the current of munificence by which she had elevated her long-cherished favourite to extraordinary opulence and power. There seems, however, to be no ground for the suspicion; Essex, as one of the first nobles of the land, closely akin to the Queen, naturally vin-

dicated to himself a distinguished place at court, where his handsome person and winning manners soon made him popular. In what light he had first viewed Raleigh is not known; but his envious disposition speedily led him to take umbrage either at the preference shown him by the Queen or at the place he held in the hearts of the easy dames who clustered about her. To whatever source it may be traced, hatred of Raleigh appears to have sprung up at once in the heart of Robert Devereux, and to have actuated his conduct through life.

At the period we have now reached he was still a stripling, while Raleigh was in the very zenith of manhood, gifted, besides, with extraordinary mental power, which had been strengthened by every variety of experience. In the absence of any clue, it would be rash to indulge in conjecture, so I give in the language of an eye-witness all that is known of Essex's first act of hostility towards Raleigh:—"Her Majesty hath taken order to depart for Richmond, on Saturday next, meaning to rest by the way at ———. The disorder happened by my Lord of Essex troubles her Majesty in such sort as I remember nothing that hath troubled her so much these seven years. There hath been a challenge sent by my Lord of Essex to Sir W. Raleigh, which is sought by the Council here to be repressed, and to be buried in silence that it may not be known to her Majesty lest it might injure the Earl." *

Eight years before, Philip of Spain had asserted in arms his claim to the throne of Portugal, defeated Don Antonio, its rightful king, in the field,† and driven him into exile. Then as now distressed princes commonly sought an asylum in England, where the fugitive Don Antonio arrived in the summer of 1581,‡ and on the evening of the 30th of June had an audience of Elizabeth. From that day forward the

* Wolley to Walsingham, December 19th, 1588. State Paper Office.
† Green to Atey, September 23rd, 1580. State Paper Office.
‡ Walsingham to Burleigh, June 25th, 1580. State Paper Office.

plausible Portuguese strove to interest the English Government in his behalf, and to organize by their aid a naval and military expedition against the oppressors of his country. For a while no progress was made in this negociation; but after the attempted invasion of England in 1588, Elizabeth lent a more favourable ear to Antonio's project, promised to furnish six ships * from the royal navy, make an advance of fifteen thousand pounds in money, and permit as many of her subjects as chose to engage their persons and fortunes in the enterprise. On the return of Medina Sidonia to Spain with fifty battered ships and a bankrupt reputation, Philip, to dissemble as far as possible the exhaustion of his kingdom and his own humiliation, openly menaced England with another and greater Armada.

Considering his hostility rather than his power, Elizabeth resolved that her subjects should visit Spain, and inflict upon its coasts and harbours the damage and distress with which England had long been vainly threatened. The justifiable ambition of Don Antonio opportunely supplied her with a fair pretext. Ships were accordingly got in readiness, mariners pressed into the navy, soldiers brought over from the Low Countries, Drake and Norris appointed to lead the forces by sea and land, with Fenner and Williams as their successors in case of accident,† while a host of gentleman volunteers, among whom was Raleigh, thronged the fleet, eager to retaliate the insult of invasion upon our inveterate enemy.‡ In the archives of Spain we find an extraordinary colour given to this transaction. Among the invaders of England seven thousand women § were expected

* This small contingent, with the vessels furnished by private persons, some Spanish authors have multiplied to 220 ships of war, with 30,000 soldiers, English and Flemish, on board. Relacion de la venida de Don Antonio de Portugal; Prior de Ocrato con la Armada de la Reyna de Inglatiera en el año de 1589. MS. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† Instructions to Norris and Drake, February 23rd, 1589. State Paper Office.

‡ The fleet sailed April 18th, 1589.

§ Examination of John Wilson, August 19th, 1588. State Paper Office.

to be included, who by the arts of licentiousness were to draw over our sturdy countrymen to the worship of saints and images. This refined policy was not lost, we are told, upon the Lutheran heretics, who, in order to allure Portugal from her allegiance to orthodoxy, despatched with Don Antonio a formidable contingent of heretical females in men's clothes, who by subtle contrivances of wantonness were to pervert the whole Portuguese nation from the truth.*

I have observed that, in this expedition, Raleigh was a volunteer; but during its continuance he appears to have found no opportunity of distinguishing himself. In something like the spirit of knight-errantry, Essex, also leaving the court clandestinely,† became a volunteer, and, by his Quixotism, threw his mistress of fifty-six into ludicrous paroxysms of rage, which threatened at one time to neutralize the policy of the expedition.‡ From beginning to end no orderly or intelligible plan was pursued: the first active blunder was made at Corunna, where, after taking and plundering the lower town, the army was constrained to re-embark without effecting anything against the fortifications. At Peniche§ the English landed without difficulty, Essex being the first to reach the shore, wading up to his shoulders through the waves. At Lisbon all they did resulted in the discovery that their enterprise was ill-planned and worse managed, and that the Portuguese were no way disposed to accept Don Antonio for their king. The English

* The object, according to an English Catholic, being to introduce the Lutheran heresy into Portugal, excellent preachers were sent with the fleet, and a number of women in men's clothes, after the manner of the heretics: para este mismo efecto para introducir la heregia por via de la sensualidad hayan mugeres en habito de hombres. MS. p. 235. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† Norris and Drake to the Council, April 7th, 1589. State Paper Office.

‡ Elizabeth unconsciously suggested the real character of her proceedings when writing to Norris and Drake, she said,—"If Essex had found the fleet they were forthwith to cause him to be sent home; if they did not they should look to answer for the same at their smart, *for these*," she added, "*be no childish actions*," May 4th, 1589. State Paper Office.

§ See 'History of the World,' vi. 99.

encountered, however, during their long marches, so little opposition that several able soldiers persuaded themselves it would have been practicable with ten or twelve thousand men to force their way through the whole Peninsula.*

In one sense the undertaking proved no failure—that is, in the taking of booty—the plunder was immense, and the loss sustained by the natives probably ten times as great as the acquisitions made by the invaders; for armies spoil and destroy whatever they are unable to remove. On their way home, likewise, they fell in with a number of Easterlings richly laden, sixty of which they captured. No act of chastisement was ever more just. The Hanse towns were not only at peace with England, but in consequence of large privileges granted them by our kings, were pledged not to supply our enemies with munitions of war. Yet the Armada of the previous year would hardly have been able to put to sea without aid from these our false friends, who were now overtaken conveying contraband of war to the Spaniards. On this occasion Raleigh comes forth for a moment into light; the fleet of Easterlings consisted of two hundred hulks, all of which the English would have seized had they possessed the means of bringing them home. Raleigh appears to have made prize of several, but his men not being sufficiently numerous, he obtained a few hands from Sir Roger Williams, who says:—

"The vessel had never been carried into England† without my means. It is well known we had above two hundred sails of all sorts, of which we could not carry with us above three score for want of men: I protest on the faith of a Christian this journey cost me above a thousand pounds. I know not what to do unless your lordships will help me to recover some part of it. The Earl of Bath discharged my men from the vessel at Dartmouth. I presume myself the

* Sir Roger Williams to Walsingham, June 1st, 1589. State Paper Office.

† The fleet returned July 2nd, 1589. Sir Anthony Wingfield in Hakluyt, ii. 649.

Earl of Essex, with all the rest that were in this action, will testify I deserve a chain as well as my fellows, but for her Majesty's displeasure which doth me wrong in this sort. Where Sir Walter Raleigh speaks of my truth, I cannot stop his mouth to belie me, for he belied the ark of Noah,* which was the best ship that ever was."

Williams then stood in so much danger for having assisted Essex in joining the expedition, that he dared not show himself, or discover where he lay; for, in the blindness of passion, Elizabeth had ordered him to be put to death; which the commanders excused themselves for disobeying, by alleging the high estimation in which he was held by the army.† Raleigh, with other distinguished commanders, had been honoured with a chain of gold by the Queen, who likewise addressed a letter to Drake and Norris‡ expressing her high approbation of their conduct, and commanding them to convey her sentiments to all the officers, soldiers, and mariners who had served in the expedition. It was consciousness of merit, not vanity, that urged Sir Roger Williams to assert his claim to a chain, though in the matter of the hulk's cargo, his attempt to defraud Raleigh was justly withstood by the Earl of Bath.

The fleet returned to England towards the end of June ;§ and Raleigh, having received his gold chain, and the value of that portion of the prizes which had fallen to his share, set sail for Ireland. In this, as in many other portions of his story, we encounter no little obscurity : at the time it was believed that, intoxicated by passion for her new favourite, Elizabeth had suffered Essex's influence to become paramount, and that he had employed it to drive Raleigh into exile.‖

* Sir Roger Williams to three members of Council, July 22nd, 1589. 'Harleian MSS.' British Museum.

† Walsingham to Windebank, May 2nd, 1589. State Paper Office.

‡ Queen to Drake and Norris, July 7th, 1589. State Paper Office.

§ Or in the beginning of July, according to Wingfield, *ubi supra*.

‖ Birch, i. 56.

The suspicion is not without probability, though some months afterwards, when reason had once more gained the upper hand in Elizabeth's mind, her partiality for the Captain of the Guard revived. Meanwhile Raleigh was engaged in one of the most pleasing episodes of his life. Nine years previous, during the stormy period of the Desmond rebellion, he had contracted a friendship with the poet Spenser, and now proceeded to visit him at his castle of Kilcolman on the Mulla. Here poetry may be supposed to have formed the chief theme of their discussions, though that they were likewise occupied by politics may be inferred from the fact that when Spenser afterwards calmly reviewed the state of Ireland, he arrived at the conviction that no man was so well qualified to establish peace and order in that country as his old poetical friend, the "Shepherd of the Ocean."*

Raleigh appears to have taken with him to Ireland several manuscript poems, which he read to Spenser, who entertained a highly favourable judgment of his imaginative and artistic powers, though of the productions which charmed so accurate a judge, few, if any, have probably come down to us. Spenser's own reading doubtless consisted of portions of the 'Fairy Queen,' three books of which he brought with him when he accompanied his friend to England, and was presented by him to Elizabeth. Afterwards, when the work appeared, the poet in a strain of affectionate gratitude, inscribed it to Sir Walter Raleigh. Other authors, both in poetry and prose, likewise selected Raleigh for their patron, as Hakluyt, Hooker (Irish Chronicle), Churchyard,† and worthy Theodore de Bry, who, when he published at Franckfort, April, 1590, his copperplate illustrations of Hariot's 'Virginia,' dedicated his work in very bad English to Raleigh.

If, as tradition maintains, Raleigh possessed a house at

* 'View of the State of Ireland.'

† Churchyard in his dedication, 1588, observes that Raleigh had spoken of him to the Queen six years before. 'Progresses,' ii. 584.

Youghal, he no doubt visited it now. The belief in Ireland is that it was a favourite residence, to which he often retired from the tumults and annoyances of court life. One who saw it lately, observes, "The interior is in its original state, wainscotted throughout with fine old Irish oak in excellent preservation; the pannels in some of the rooms are richly carved, especially in the drawing-room, the chimney-piece of which exhibits an exquisite specimen of the elaborate work of the day, being enriched with various grotesque figures and emblems; the roof, being also of Irish oak, remains untouched, having apparently suffered nothing from the hand of time." In the garden are found many beautiful myrtles, some of them twenty feet high, which have given the place the name of "Myrtle Grove."* Here, at the foot of numerous exotics, Raleigh caused to be planted the first potatoes in Ireland, from roots brought by his friend Hariot from Virginia. As he was not present when the plants arrived at maturity, the gardener collected the apples, which were what he supposed to be intended for food, but not liking the taste, thought no more of the potato. Afterwards, when the ground came to be dug up for other purposes, the roots, together with their use, were discovered, and from them Ireland was supplied with the great staple of its nourishment.

In his 'History of the World,' Raleigh, while speaking of the long lives of the patriarchs, alludes to an incident belonging to this part of his story; observing that in 1589 he became acquainted with the old Countess of Desmond,† who had been married in the reign of Edward IV.

While Raleigh was thus yielding to the seductions of art and the delights of friendship, his enemies were secretly opening up a pit into which they rightly judged he must sooner or later fall. Elizabeth's single and childless state inspired all who busied themselves respecting the future with the desire to

* Hardy, 'Tourists' Guide through Ireland.'

† 'History of the World,' ii. 151.

conciliate her presumptive successor. Essex especially, with a craft and forethought not often found in a gay nobleman of twenty-two, entered into a correspondence with James of Scotland, which, assuming various colours as it proceeded, and involving many new agents and shifting aims in its progress, terminated in treason and death. Though his tenure of the post of favourite had been brief, he already professed to have grown tired of it, and his sisters, who both longed to become Queens of Sheba to the new Solomon, actively co-operated in his northern intrigue; one of them, who had boundless faith in the beauty which had led Sidney astray, boldly sending her portrait to the man whom she was eager to make master of the original. To these sanguine intriguers Elizabeth's health seemed to break up far too slowly, though their wishes betrayed them into the belief that she could not last long.

In the jargon of these plotters the Queen was called Venus; James of Scotland, Victor; Lady Rich, Ryalta; and Essex, The Weary Knight. All who had incurred the dislike of the correspondents were dressed up like the victims of the Inquisition, in hideous and grotesque drapery, to excite the vindictiveness or contempt of Solomon and his courtiers.*

Over all men's lives circumstances and approximations, with the originating of which they have nothing to do, exert important influences. While listening to the calumnies of Raleigh's worst enemies, James unwittingly brought home from the Baltic one of the stanchest and truest friends Raleigh ever possessed; one who stood by him in his days of greatest peril, soothed him in his long captivity, and spent many of the days of her unhappy life in the endeavour to save his. This was Anne of Denmark,† who, beneath the breath of persecution, scandal, and neglect, withered

* Fowler to Burleigh, Murdin, p. 640.

† Sister to Christian IV., who became king in 1588, and died in 1648, after a reign of sixty years. Raumer, i. 81.

away in Scotland first, and afterwards in England, commanding no respect and exciting little sympathy.

At Court Raleigh's enemies, open or disguised, were multiplying and rising to greater power, with Burleigh at their head, to whom may be attributed the failure of all his attempts to obtain a higher title or a place in the Government. Some advantage he may have promised himself from the marriage of Robert Cecil with the daughter of Lord Cobham, for whose eldest son Henry he entertained a friendship, destined to prove fatal to them both.

Raleigh has obtained in history credit for almost unrivalled craft and subtlety. I fail to discover them in his conduct. He provoked the enmity of the powerful, and connected himself with unfortunate men, assisted the poor, pleaded for the persecuted—a course which has seldom in any age led to success. Leicester, who had been the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies, was now no more; his brother, the Earl of Warwick, soon afterwards died through the effect of a wound from a poisoned bullet. In Walsingham* he lost an enemy as well as in Hatton, while some of those who were working their way into office and power he had reason to look upon as well-wishers. Among these was the younger Cecil, the husband of Elizabeth Brooke, who, for reasons not then apparent, courted Raleigh's friendship, on which he affected to set a high value. How much this sentiment in him was worth we shall see hereafter, when the sheltering favour of Elizabeth being withdrawn, the old Captain of the Guard stood exposed to the chilling airs of a hostile Court.

* Lloyd, in his 'State Worthies, i. 398—402, draws up a character of Walsingham, shrewd and pointed, but without dates or circumstances. He regards him as one of the greatest of statesmen, justly, though it be now the fashion to underrate him.

CHAPTER XII.

ELIZABETH THROGMORTON.

I HAVE already spoken of Raleigh's friendly behaviour towards literary men, with whom he loved to associate, and who, from the nature of his favourite pursuits, rightly regarded him as one of themselves. It was not in such intercourse that Raleigh's pride displayed itself. With poets and historians he found himself among his equals, who loved him for his frank and genial humour, and the earnestness with which he sought to promote their interests.

Even theological writers, whose works were little in harmony with his tastes, often, when in distress or peril, appealed to him as to their natural protector. Leicester, during his life, had been a patron of the Puritans, and Raleigh, his successor in the Queen's favour, was expected to act the same noble part. Udal, a learned divine of unblemished life, though gifted with more zeal than discretion, had provoked the hostility of the bishops, by urging the necessity of a new reformation in the church. During seven years this worthy man had been minister of Kingston-upon-Thames, whence he had been removed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he wrote and published a book, entitled, 'The Demonstration of Discipline.'

The Government of England was then slowly and reluctantly laying aside, one after another, the characteristics of despotism, to the great disgust of church dignitaries, as well as of many judges, and ministers, who, to punish any one

that differed from them in opinion or offended the Queen, were seldom reluctant to take upon themselves the guilt of innocent blood. Elizabeth was a supporter of bishops: Udal assailed the authority of those bishops; by assailing their authority, he assailed hers, which, the judges maintained, was treason. From being a critic on ecclesiastical regulations, Udal found himself elevated to the highest rank of state criminals; and, through a juggle practised by Puckering on the jury at his trial, was condemned to death.

A friend now advised him to interest Raleigh* in his behalf, doubtless because the Captain of the Guard was known to be friendly to toleration. Other influential persons, as Dean Nowell, and the Earl of Essex,† interceded for the prisoner, but without avail; for though he escaped a public execution, his constitution sank under the severity of his confinement, and he died in prison.

Another unfortunate individual, apparently about the same period, besought Raleigh's interference for him with the Government. Captain Spring, an old officer, who had received many wounds in the public service, found age creeping upon him at the same time with poverty, while a sum equal to one thousand five hundred pounds of our money was due to him from the Treasury. Having long applied in vain for payment, he at last appealed to Raleigh, who seems to have been looked upon as the intercessor-general of all who were in difficulties.

As Elizabeth had fits of niggardliness, he occasionally provoked her by his demands of this kind, so that one day, in a pettish mood, she exclaimed, "Raleigh, when will you cease to be a beggar?"—"When your Majesty," he replied in his courtliest tone, "ceases to be a benefactor."

* Oldys, p. 137, refers to Udal's pamphlet for what regards Raleigh's interference.

† Neal, 'History of the Puritans,' i. 414. Strype, 'Life of Whitgift,' assures us that the persecuting archbishop himself interfered to save Udal's life.

In the spring of 1591, an expedition was fitted out under Lord Thomas Howard as admiral, and Raleigh's cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, as vice-admiral, to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet about the Azores. In this Grenville, one of the bravest of the brave, lost his life. No sea-fight on record is more remarkable, for Grenville, in the 'Revenge,' plunged into the heart of the hostile Armada, and sustained its whole fire, till his ship began to sink under him, when he ordered it to be blown up. As he lay mortally wounded upon the deck, his orders were disobeyed, so that he was taken prisoner by the enemy, who, admiring his valour, treated him with the utmost courtesy. Impatient of captivity, however, even for a few hours, he hastened his own death, by crushing with his teeth and swallowing the fragments of a glass in which wine was presented to him.

Of this battle we have a history by Raleigh, in his most brilliant style, full of proud sentiments, and breathing throughout the fiercest hostility to Spain.

The date of Raleigh's acquisition of Sherbourne Castle, which can only be determined by conjecture, seems generally for that reason to have been wrongly given. Oldys, and all succeeding biographers, suppose the gift to have been made by Elizabeth in 1594; but the facts of the case concur in proving it to have taken place two years earlier. Dr John Piers was translated from the See of Salisbury to the Archbishopric of York about the beginning of 1589, and Dr Coldwell, the next bishop, was not elected to succeed him till December, 1591, though he became a petitioner to Burleigh for the See in 1590. In the interval between these two dates he probably consented to make over to the Crown the castle and manor of Sherbourne. Once in possession of Elizabeth, it was sure to pass into the hands of some favourite, and Raleigh, we are told, personally begged it of the Queen. From the month of March, 1592, till his return from Cadiz, 1596, Raleigh was never admitted into Elizabeth's presence; and was in so much disgrace, that instead

of bestowing on him castles and manors, she suspended him from his office of Captain of the Guard. It must therefore have been during the winter of 1591-92, that he became master of Sherbourne, which was thenceforward rendered celebrated by its connection with his name. What Bacon did for Gorhambury Raleigh did in a still more remarkable degree for Sherbourne; repairing the castle, erecting a magnificent mansion close at hand, and laying out the grounds with the greatest refinement of taste.

In the midst of beautiful gardens and orchards, a river, artificially introduced, broke over rocks in rapids and cascades, and then diffused itself in brooks and runnels, among luxuriant plantations of native and exotic shrubs.

But all these rural allurements failed to detain him long from Court, to which a magnet of the most fascinating power now drew him. This was the lovely Elizabeth Throgmorton, an orphan of the rarest attractions, whose virtue, devotion, and misfortunes shed a lustre over the close of the sixteenth and the early years of the seventeenth century. Her first appearance, however, in Raleigh's biography boded anything but an enviable fame. Their intercourse, clandestine and illicit, soon became visible to the keen eyes of envy, upon which scandal made itself busy with the lady's reputation. For a while, dread of Elizabeth's tempestuous anger, coupled with unwillingness to provoke Raleigh's resentment, restrained the courtiers from withdrawing the veil from this perilous amour, because they knew that Raleigh's Panama expedition, upon which he must soon put out to sea, would afford them ample opportunities of effecting his ruin.

The Throgmorton, probably in her twenty-third year, was a tall woman, with light hair, large blue eyes, and fine oval features. Her portrait, seemingly the only one taken of her, has never come under my observation, neither does any engraving appear to have been made of it. I shall therefore borrow Oldys's description, which conveys a clear idea of her appearance and costume: "She has on," he says,

"a dark-coloured, hanging-sleeve robe, tufted on the arms, and under it a close-bodied gown, of white satin flowered with black, with close sleeves down to the wrist; has a rich ruby in her ear, bedropt with large pearls; a laced whisk rising above the shoulders; her bosom uncovered, and a jewel hanging thereon, with a large chain of pearl round her neck down to her waist."*

How, or by whom, the discovery of Raleigh's love for her was made no one has told us; but a letter of the period has been found, written from some one in the palace, to a friend without, which evidently alludes to it. "S. W. R.," the writer says, "hath been too inward with one of her Majesty's maids: I fear to say who; but if you should guess at E. T., you may not be far wrong. The matter hath only now been apparent to all eyes, and the lady hath been sent away; but nobody believes it can end there. S. W. R. hath escaped from London for a time; he will be speedily sent for and brought back, where what awaiteth him nobody knoweth save by conjecture."†

> There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we may.

So it was with Raleigh: this wrong act, through the influence of a benignant Nemesis, proved a far greater blessing to him than all the right acts he ever performed; his successes in war or ambition, the Queen's favour, his opulence, his fame, were mere dross compared with Throgmorton's undying love, which clung to him in the Tower, in absence, and death, and survived till she took her place beside him in the grave.

Yet, at the outset, Raleigh's conduct was not such as to entitle him to so true a love: leaving her to face alone the scoffs of malice and the derision of the base, he proceeded

* 'Life of Raleigh,' p. 353.

† Mr Payne Collier, who communicated this letter to the 'Archæologia,' xxxiv. 161, omits to say where he found it.

on his expedition, and wrote to Sir Robert Cecil from Chatham :—

"I mean not to come away, as they say I will, for fear of a marriage and I know not what. If any such thing were, I would have imparted it to yourself before any man living; and therefore I pray you believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress what you can any such malicious report. For I protest, before God, there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened unto."*

Here he distinctly denies that any private marriage had taken place, and affirms, with still greater vehemence, that there existed no woman whom he desired to marry. His connection, therefore, with Elizabeth Throgmorton was a seduction and a desertion. When the nature of the affair was revealed to the Queen, it is no ways surprising that she should have been thrown into a paroxysm of rage. The favourite had always professed the most passionate adoration for herself, and now it appeared he had all the while been cherishing a secret preference for another. To enjoy his company she had, up to the moment of his departure, been manœuvring to withdraw him from the expedition, and get the chief command transferred to Burgh and Frobisher. He should now be recalled from very different motives, and for a different purpose. To the Tower with him and his minion, and let both be for ever banished her presence.

This was Elizabeth's fiat, which, as we shall see, resulted ultimately in the overthrow of the offender; for during his four years of exclusion all the enemies he had made—and they were not a few—enjoyed full leisure and opportunity to obstruct the growth of his fortunes, to fill up the places to which he might have attained, and to fix firmly in power and authority the persons most inimical to his advancement.

The expedition to the Azores of the previous year, in which Grenville fell, had been so prolific of prize-money, that it tempted Raleigh, the Lord-admiral, and others, to

* March 10th, 1592.

organize another enterprise, in the hope of capturing the whole treasure-fleet of Spain. The contributions amounted to thirty-six thousand pounds. Raleigh, in the boundlessness of his confidence, embarked his whole fortune; and many other persons became lavish in their quotas through their reliance on his courage and skill as a commander. He left England, however, with the vulture of Prometheus at his heart; for he well knew that when the Queen should discover his heinous transgression, he would be flung in a moment from his high estate, perhaps to grovel for ever in disgrace and poverty, even if some device were not hit upon to justify, or at least colour, his execution.

Stimulated by such feelings, he exhausted all the resources of his seamanship to put as many leagues of ocean as possible between him and his enraged mistress. His efforts were vain. On the second day of his voyage, Sir Martin Frobisher, in the Lord-admiral's pinnace, 'Disdain,' overtook him with the Queen's peremptory order for his return. To gain time would be something; so interpreting Elizabeth's language as best suited his own views, he persisted in his design. Some days later he spoke a French ship with an Englishman on board, who had been for several years a captive in Spain; this man's report was that Philip, having heard of Raleigh's preparations, had sent orders to America that no treasure-ship should cross the Atlantic that year. This was discouraging; but still the truant lover went on, hoping doubtless that fortune, which seldom favoured him, would now at his utmost need throw prizes in his way, with which he might mitigate the hostility of the Court. His evil genius, however, pursued him. Off Cape Finisterre he encountered a hurricane, which scattered his fleet, sank many of his boats and pinnaces, and sobered his mind into the proper mood for obedience.

Before quitting the fleet he drew up instructions for the guidance of Frobisher and Burgh; which done, he descended from the deck of the 'Garland,' into Effingham's pinnace,

and, with the worst possible forebodings, returned to England.

Over these transactions, and several that follow, much obscurity still hangs. Raleigh reached England about the middle of July, and on the 21st was sent a prisoner to the Tower, together, as is commonly believed, with Elizabeth Throgmorton. This belief appears to rest on the credit of Sir Edward Stafford, who, in a very silly letter to Anthony Bacon, says, jestingly, that if he had any love to make to Mistress Throgmorton, he might meet her next day at the Tower.*

At first Raleigh was committed to the custody of his relative, Sir George, afterwards Lord Carew, who, as Master of the Ordnance, had apartments in the Tower, whence the prisoner wrote numerous letters to Cecil, intended for the Queen's eye, and sure to meet it. The flatteries and bemoanings of himself they contain have been deservedly censured, though Elizabeth's placability, and appetite for adulation, obviously inspired them. It is far from pleasant to dwell upon the failings and vices of distinguished men, though to keep them out of sight would be to convert biography into panegyric; it must be owned, therefore, that Raleigh, in the hope of soothing the angry queen, indulged in the most grotesque flattery, by comparing a lady of sixty to Venus, affirming that she rode like Alexander, and that his soul panted to behold once more her golden ringlets waving in the wind about her ivory neck. He not only wrote flattery, however, he enacted it; for when Elizabeth paid a visit to her Master of the Ordnance, Raleigh got up a sort of sham-fight with the gallant soldier, for the privilege of beholding the royal nymph in her barge.

Growing weary of amorous effusions and extravagancies, Raleigh turned to business, and applied to the Lord-treasurer and the Secretary in behalf of his tenants in Ireland. The Lord-deputy, it appears, counted among his enemies, and eagerly took advantage of his imprisonment to spoil his

* Stafford to Anthony Bacon, July 28th, 1592. Lambeth MSS.

estate, as well as to obstruct the Queen's service. Feigning Raleigh to be indebted to the crown in the sum of four hundred pounds, he seized the cattle of the husbandmen, and sold them to make up that sum. For these, and other reasons, Raleigh foresaw the probability of a rising in Munster, and through his friend Killigrew disclosed his suspicions to Elizabeth. When his predictions were shown to her, she laughed at them; but in less than ten days the prophecy became a reality, for upwards of three thousand rebels were in arms, to the utter bewilderment of the Lord-deputy.

When Raleigh learned that the Queen was about to go in progress, as was her wont every summer, he had recourse to every device and means in his power to obtain leave to accompany her as Captain of the Guard,—to no purpose. She quitted London without him, though her resolution might possibly have been changed had she known of the plot succinctly described in the following document:—"Some tall soldier, an Irishman, was to execute the enterprise as a godly act, illustrated by the history of Judith and Holofernes. They appointed him in what sort he shall execute the same, to buy a gelding of twenty pounds, and lie in wait for her Majesty, as she should ride abroad in progress, and to strike her with a sword, or to watch her at a door with a supplication, and strike her with a dagger, or strong knife." *

For some time after this Raleigh remained shrouded from the outer world. Whether or not he possessed means of communicating with Elizabeth Throgmorton, or whether he desired to make use of them if he did, is unknown; be this as it may, the cause of his imprisonment places him altogether beyond our sympathy. He deserved what he was suffering, and would have deserved far more had he not, in that forced leisure for reflection, resolved on the manly course of repairing the wrong he had done.

* The practice of Sir William Stanley and Sir Hugh Owen for the destroying of her Majesty by the hands of Hugh Colsill. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XIII.

MADRE DE DIOS.

The Panama expedition having, by Raleigh's recall,* been diverted from its chief purpose, his Vice-admirals made use of the force under their command in the way they deemed best calculated to preserve its originators from detriment. Dexterously eluding an attack from the Spanish fleet, with which Sir Martin Frobisher was left to deal, Burgh sailed away for the Azores, which he reached in the midst of summer, and cruising leisurely about, now running so close along shore that he could reckon the vessels in harbour, now putting far out into the sunny sea, he kept intently on the look-out for the gorgeous carracks of Spain. Before the fleet separated, the 'Santa Clara,' a ship of six hundred tons burden, had been taken, but its cargo consisting chiefly of hardware, though worth eighteen or twenty thousand pounds to the Spaniards, was scarcely estimated at a third of that value to its captors. Still, after subjecting her to a thorough rummaging, they despatched her to England.

Day after day small prizes dropped into the hands of the English Admiral, which were regarded as earnests of better fortune to come. On the 21st of June, Burgh put into Santa Cruz in the island of Flores, where he learned that though no fleet was this year expected from America, numerous immense carracks were on their way from the

* Hakluyt, iii. 9.

East Indies to Lisbon, one of which had, in fact, sailed past only three days before.

After such intelligence there could be no dallying on shore; putting out, therefore, in all haste, they presently discovered one of the carracks lying becalmed on the ocean, while some leagues to the east two or three ships belonging to the Earl of Cumberland hove in sight. Determined to be first, Burgh lowered a boat, and stepping into it, pulled three miles to take a clear view of the expected prize, the boarding of which was deferred till the morning. But during the night a storm came on, and the carrack running into harbour, its commander set it on fire, and landing his men with a number of guns, stationed them on the beach, to hinder the English from extinguishing the flames. By the skill and bravery of our countrymen, however, the Portuguese were driven off, and all the plunder that could be saved from the fire was taken.

Cumberland's ships, together with others belonging to Raleigh and the Queen, now coming in, it was resolved to act in concert, so spreading themselves out into a long line athwart the ocean, commanding a view of two whole degrees of latitude, they awaited the advent of the other carracks.

Drawn up thus they lay patiently from the 29th of June till the 3rd of August, when the mighty bulk of the 'Madre de Dios' was beheld approaching from the south. There was now a race between the 'Dainty,' belonging to Sir John Hawkins, commanded by Captain Thomson, and Raleigh's ship the 'Roebuck,' commanded by Burgh himself. The 'Dainty' being a swift sailer got the start of the whole fleet, and began the conflict, not a little to her cost; but the 'Roebuck' coming up, discharged her great guns into the carrack, and continued the fight till Sir Robert Cross in the 'Foresight,' the Queen's own ship, and several others, joined in the mêlée.

Consulting on the course to be taken, it was determined to board at once, lest the 'Madre de Dios,' following the

example of the 'Santa Cruz,' should make for the shore, and fire herself. The combat was long and sanguinary; the 'Roebuck' and the 'Foresight' fastened themselves with grappling-irons to the carrack, while the guns on both sides were worked without intermission. At length the 'Roebuck' received a shot under water, and being in danger of sinking, detached herself from the enemy, while the 'Foresight' was required to do the like. Upon this the carrack turned its prow towards the shore, and would certainly have escaped had not Sir Robert Cross thrown his ship athwart her bows, and maintained the fight singly during three hours, till the others coming up, she was boarded and taken.

To us in these days a ship of sixteen hundred tons is no marvel, but to Raleigh's contemporaries it was a sight altogether extraordinary. Its cargo, likewise, from its riches and variety, excited admiration, though the jewels, which, on its departure from the Malabar coast, were supposed to have been numerous, and of immense value, had been stolen and concealed. The other articles on board consisted of spices, drugs, perfumes, silks, calicoes, quilts, carpets, and dyes. The spices were pepper, cloves, mace, nutmegs, cinnamon, green ginger; the principal drugs were benzoin, frankincense, aloes, and camphor. Besides various sorts of linens and muslins, there were canopies and quilts of sarcenet; carpets like those of Turkey, with pearls, musk, civet, and ambergris. To these may be added, elephants' teeth, porcelain vessels of China, bedsteads of ebony wood, cloth of the bark of trees, the whole estimated to have amounted originally to half a million sterling in value, though by the time the goods reached London it fell short of half that sum.

To show the extent to which robbery had taken place on board, it is stated that the 'Madre de Dios,' when brought into Dartmouth, had risen five feet higher out of the water than when she left the harbour of Cochin. But this suggests an erroneous conclusion. Without the agency of theft, she

had been made lighter in various ways, by the consumption of wine and provisions during a voyage of some months, by the removal of nearly seven hundred persons, crew and passengers included, a few men only being left to work the carrack. Burgh did all he could towards preventing robbery, by seizing on the ship and cargo in the Queen's name; but the charm was too weak to restrain the cupidity of reckless mariners, who, accustomed all their lives to consider everything Spanish as lawful plunder, helped themselves boldly to whatever they fancied on their way home.

In the course of three weeks news of this immense capture reached Raleigh in the Tower, probably through Sir John Hawkins, his principal partner in the enterprise; and on the 27th of August they addressed a joint letter to the Lord-Admiral, requesting that the three ships-of-war, which then constituted our Channel Fleet, might be sent out to meet and convoy the prize to England. This fear was, lest the Spanish men-of-war, then known to be cruising on the coast of Bretagne, should retake the carrack, and so deprive her Majesty and them of the captured property.

To show likewise the insecurity of our ports in the sixteenth century, it may be observed that both Raleigh and Hawkins were apprehensive, that if not protected by the Queen's ships-of-war, the carrack might be cut out or burnt in harbour, our maritime defences being too weak of themselves to prevent such a catastrophe.

At length, on Elizabeth's birthday, the huge 'Madre de Dios' floated into the harbour of Dartmouth, where her arrival excited unparalleled admiration.* All Devonshire was in an uproar; thousands flocked to the shore: letters to friends in London brought down other thousands, not, however, for the purpose of gratifying mere curiosity, but by illicit dealings with the seamen to fill their purses. Raleigh's

* This was universally admitted to have been the largest prize ever brought into England. Morgan Colman to Anthony Bacon, September 27th, 1592. Lambeth MSS.

biographers lose no opportunity of censuring the behaviour of Elizabeth, and on this occasion are very angry at what they term her hard usage of the disgraced favourite. But in order to enable him to watch over his interest in the carrack, she consented to his release from the Tower,* apparently about the 15th of September, and permitted him, though under the surveillance of a keeper, to repair to what was literally a scene of pillage and confusion. Urgently as his presence was demanded at Dartmouth, he yet remained two days in London, for the purpose, as I conjecture, of making Bessy Throgmorton his wife, after which he posted westwards on his business errand.

On the 16th, Elizabeth issued instructions to Sir Robert Cecil, and Thomas Middleton, appointing them to be treasurers "for the order of all manner of prizes that are come from the seas this present month."† . . . . "The cargo," it is said, "of the carrack ('Madre de Dios'), by the Queen's order, is to be conveyed by sea and land, and be brought to the Thames afore our house of Greenwich, where order shall be given that the same may be valued, and safely bestowed, and hereafter put to sale there, as shall be ordered. The sheriff of Devon is to issue a strait commandment in our name, that no people of London, nor of any other town, shall resort thither, and if any shall come, and will not depart, the same to be committed to prison."

Other commissioners had been previously despatched, but Cecil being the principal, and knowing that the chief responsibility rested on him, hastened with the utmost speed to his post. Arrived at Exeter, while Raleigh with his keeper Blount followed close at his heels, Cecil wrote on the 19th the following characteristic and amusing letter to his father:—

"I do send this bearer only to your lordship, that you

* Morgan Colman, writing to Anthony Bacon on the 23rd September, speaks of Raleigh's release, but mentions no day. Lambeth MSS.

† MS. State Paper Office.

may know that I am passed by Exeter, where I did take this course; whomsoever I met by the way within seven miles, with anything, either in cloke or malle, which did but smell of the prizes, either at Dartmouth or Plymouth, for I assure your lordship I could well smell them, such hath been the spoils of amber and musk, I did though he had little about him, return him with me to the town of Exeter, where I stayed any that could carry news to Dartmouth and Plymouth. I compelled them also to tell me where any malles or trunks were, and I by this inquisition finding the people stubborn, till I committed two of them to prison, which example would have won the Queen twenty thousand pound a week past.

"I have lighted upon a Londoner's shop, in whose possession we have found a bag of seed pearls, divers pieces of damask, . . . and calicoes, with a very great pot of musk; certain strings of pearls, with divers other things, which are by inventory described.

"I do mean, my lord, forthwith to be at Dartmouth, and to have a privy search there, and in Plymouth. I have stayed here this night and morning, because I understand of divers things, and by my rough dealing with them, I have left an impression with the mayor and the rest. I have taken order to search every bag and mail coming from the west, and though, I fear, that the bird be flown for jewels, pearls, and amber, yet will I not doubt to save her Majesty in recovering the pillage, which is almost all desperate that which shall be worth my journey. My lord, there was never such spoil. I have intercepted letters, wherein I find who hath written to London to their friends to come down, and wherein they have promised what they will do for them. I do keep the letter to charge the parties at Dartmouth, and this party who had all these things is gone to-day back again for new booty. I will take him by the way, and make as much benefit of him and his knowledge as I can. And thus in haste I humbly take my leave

from Exeter, ready to ride to Dartmouth this night, at ten of the clock. I will suppress the confluence of these buyers, of which there are above two thousand, and except they be removed there will be no good. The name of commissioners is common in this country, and in these causes; but my coming down hath made many stagger. Fouler weather, desperater ways, nor more obstinate people did I never meet with: I will tarry four or five days at Dartmouth and Plymouth, but no longer. I beseech your lordship, whatsoever any man shall write from hence to your lordship of the necessity of the presence of any bearing the title I unworthily carry, for I will begin them such a pattern that, if they follow, much pillage will be recovered.

"All the goods, whereof I send you a note, were bought since the Proclamation. I found, besides, in his unlooked-for charge an armlet of gold, a fork and spoon of crystal, with rubies, which I reserve for the Queen.

"Her Majesty's captive (Raleigh) comes after me, but I have outrid him, and will be at Dartmouth before him."*

The inventory above referred to is as follows:—

A great pot of musk; twenty-six pieces of Calicut lawn; eight pieces of calico; eight bundles of twisted silk; two pieces of white silk; fifty-nine pieces of white cyprus; carnation taffeta, a remnant; a white quilted kirtle; three spoons of mother-of-pearl; a bag of pearl, wherein is two or three pieces of goldsmiths' work, with rubies, and a crystal; a bag of good pearl; a quilt for a bed, and a canopy.

Still keeping ahead of Raleigh, Cecil pushed on to Dartmouth, which he reached on the twenty-first, less than one hour before his pursuer. What happened there his pen shall relate with all the spirit and colour of the time. "As soon as I came on board the carrack, on Wednesday, at one of the clock, with the rest of her Majesty's commissioners, within one hour, Sir Walter Raleigh arrived with his

* Exeter, September 19th, 1592. State Paper Office.

keeper, Mr Blount. I assure you, sir, his poor servants, to the number of a hundred and forty, goodly men, and all the mariners, came to him with such shouts and joy as I never saw a man more troubled to quiet them in my life. But his heart is broken, for he is extremely pensive longer than he is busied, in which he can toil terribly, but if you did hear him rage at the spoils, finding all the short wares utterly devoured, you would laugh as I do, which I cannot choose. The meeting between him and Sir John Gilbert was with tears on Sir John's part; and he belike finding that it is known he had a keeper, whensoever he is saluted with congratulation for liberty, he doth answer, 'No, I am still the Queen of England's poor captive.' I wished him to conceal it, because, here it diminishes his credit, which I do vow to you before God is greater amongst the mariners than I thought for. I do grace him as much as I may, for I find him marvellously greedy to do anything to recover the conceit of his brutish offence. I have examined Sir John Gilbert by others, and all his, who I find clear. I protest to you, in most men's opinions, his heart was so great till his brother was at liberty, that he never came but once to the town, and never was aboard her; but now he is sworn, he doth set all wholly aboard to hunt out others, and inform us daily by his spies, wherein he could not be so bold, if he could have been now touched, which I assure you on my faith I do think him wronged in this, howsoever in others he may have done like a Devonshire man."*

During the next month Raleigh's brother, Carew, who, like himself, undertook enterprises at sea in conjunction with the Queen, captured and took into Milford Haven a large Biscayan ship, laden with fish, respecting which Burleigh bestirred himself as actively as about the great carrack.†

* Sir Robert Cecil to the Right Hon. Sir Thomas Heneage. MS. State Paper Office.

† Burleigh to Revell and Owen, October 24th. Letter of Carew Raleigh, October 28th, 1592. State Paper Office.

For a considerable period after this date Raleigh occupied an anomalous position. Out of favour, and affecting to be out of health and spirits, he steadily kept his attention fixed on public affairs, watched the machinations of Spain, in France, in the Low Countries, in Scotland, and in Ireland. The intrigues carried on against him at Court were numerous, chiefly through the influence of Essex and his friends; yet, as he never for a moment lost sight of the gratitude he owed Elizabeth, his exertions in parliament were unremitting in favour of the Government, which was especially the case in the parliament of 1593, which sat from February till April. The principal subject of debate was the application of the Government for subsidies for carrying on the war against Spain, when Bacon, basing his opposition on the poverty of the people, argued against Raleigh, Cecil, and the Court speakers, generally with partial success.* Into the minutiæ of these debates it is unnecessary to enter, since they belong less to Raleigh's biography than to the history of the country. It may be remarked, however, that the sagacity of his views of public affairs was almost unerring, as after neglecting his counsel, and wandering away in different directions, the statesmen of the time generally found themselves constrained to retrace their steps, and adopt the policy he had recommended to them from the first.

In the same parliament Raleigh combated, though with caution and reserve, the intolerance of the age: persecution, though less sweeping than under Mary, still soothed the orthodox with numerous victims.† Elizabeth, as a Tudor and as a bigot, cared little for human life when the sacrifice of it was demanded by the supposed interests of the church, or of her own authority, as was made evident on numerous

* Mr Hepworth Dixon, 'Story of Lord Bacon,' p. 65.

† In 1575, some Dutch Anabaptists being found in England, were savagely persecuted, and two of them (women) burnt in Smithfield. Bohun, p. 48.

occasions, though never more strikingly than in her treatment of the Puritans. Towards the close of the session of 1593, a bill was brought into the Commons for the suppression of the Brownists,* but expressed in terms so general that hardly any person could consider himself safe from its operation. Who and what the Brownists were may be explained in a few words: they agreed with the church in doctrine, but differed from it in matters of discipline, being opposed to prelacy, to subscription, and to the predominance of one congregation over another, for which last reason they afterwards obtained the name of Independents. Meaning to screen them from death, yet not forgetting who were their enemies, Raleigh admitted they were fit persons to be rooted out of a commonwealth; but nonplussed their persecutors by inquiring if all the men of the sect were put to death, or banished, who should maintain their wives and children. By way of giving full force to this consideration, he reminded the House that the sect amounted at least to twenty thousand persons, and were scattered all over England.†

The fineness of his coup d'œil, and the correctness of his political inferences, are nowhere more manifest than in his opinions and predictions concerning Ireland: after condemning the waste of our resources in France, while we neglected our interests in the defences next the heart, he goes on to say, "Her Majesty hath good cause to remember that a million hath been spent in Ireland not many years since. A better kingdom might have been purchased at a less price, and that same defended with as many pence, if good order had been taken. But the question may be, whether for so great expense the estate be not less assured

* The Brownists were first sought to be suppressed by the burning of their books, but when that failed, two of them were hanged at St Edmund's Bury. Bohun, pp. 48, 49.

† D'Ewes, 'Journal of Parliament,' p. 517. Neal, 'History of the Puritans,' i. 428.

than ever. If her Majesty consider it aright, she shall find it no small dishonour to be vexed with so beggarly a nation, that have neither arms nor fortifications ; but that accursed kingdom hath always been but as a traffic, for which her Majesty hath paid both freight and custom, and others received the merchandise ; and other than such it shall never be."*

* Raleigh to Cecil, May 10th, 1593. Murdin, p. 664.

CHAPTER XIV.

GUIANA.

At the close of the session, Raleigh quitted London, and returned to Sherbourne Castle, which he called his "Fortune's Fold," and there made what efforts he could to enjoy the pleasures of the country and the society of his wife.

It would be highly erroneous to represent him to ourselves as a calm philosopher, meditating, in the shades of Sherbourne, on the laws of nature, or the vanity of earthly things. On the contrary, he chafed at his forced inaction, and could not be soothed even by gentle words from Bessy's lips, "though fresh as rose in June." Men of action are rarely content. Enigmas to themselves, they must be so to the rest of the world, to whom nothing is less intelligible than the craving for toil and the fierce delight afforded by conflict and danger.

Raleigh was now in his forty-first year, and it would indeed have been strange could he then have relinquished voluntarily the career of ambition upon which, in his own opinion, he had scarcely entered, so trifling was what he had achieved compared with what he had projected. The maelstrom of his thoughts whirled incessantly about one point—the means of recovering the Queen's favour. He had seen others offend and obtain forgiveness with little or no delay, and could discover no reason why his case should differ from theirs. Yet, while in theory he recognized the truth that

"hatreds are the cinders of affection," he persisted in the endeavour to fan those cinders into a flame.

Through Cecil he suggested to Elizabeth his views of the policy to be pursued in Scotland and in Ireland, and, at the same time, adroitly brought in complaints of the unjust usage to which the Queen's resentment exposed him. All was of no avail; the cycle of his labours, sufferings, adventures, disappointments, victories, was to be far more vast and protracted before his vindictive mistress would re-admit him to her presence, though never again to smile on him as of yore. He had helped her to a discovery which she would have been happy not to have made, and, when the period of his probation should have been fulfilled, all reserved for him was that reasonable friendship which, in strong natures, sometimes makes itself a place among the ashes of love.

Finding indirect supplications useless, he resolved upon laying open his thoughts to Elizabeth herself. This he at first attempted in a paper on the designs of the Spanish faction in Scotland, which he contrived to get laid before her, but without obtaining any advantage, or even so much as an acknowledgment. He then bethought him of touching on the topic nearest her heart—that of the succession—which he could handle, he assured her, either by writing or speaking, so as completely to silence her adversaries.

If Elizabeth was imperious, wayward, terrible in her resentments, she was likewise generous, and by no means inclined to sympathize with those who would trample on the fallen. To this fine quality of her nature Raleigh, therefore, as a last resource appealed. "Your Majesty having left me," he says, "I am left all alone in the world, and am sorry that ever I was at all. What I have done is out of zeal and love, and not by any encouragement, for I am only forgotten in all rights and in all affairs, and mine enemies have their wills and desires over me."

No result being produced by these endeavours, Raleigh fell back upon his own mental resources, and out of them be-

gan to shape a new course of action for himself. He had already led the way to the planting of the English race in North America, where, leaving it to grow up and acquire strength, as he had full faith it would, he directed his speculations towards the southern hemisphere, and projected an expedition to Guiana.

To obtain more precise information than he could gather from books, though he was a diligent and quick-sighted student, he despatched a bark under the command of Captain Whiddon to make a preliminary survey of the southern islands in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as of the coast of Guiana, and shortly afterwards repaired to London, where, with his wife and infant son, Walter, he lived in great magnificence. Besides his natural taste for splendour, he had politic reasons for acting after that fashion; since exactly in proportion to men's belief in his opulence would he find coadjutors in his new project. But his affectionate Bessie, who cared more for the man than for the adventurer, looked with a feeling of dismay, strongly resembling prescience, on her lord's design. Cecil had been her friend, apparently from girlhood; he was also at this time—no reasons for the contrary as yet appearing—the friend of her husband, who relied almost exclusively on his good offices for reinstatement in his place at Court.

To him the anxious wife now addressed herself, and, in a letter full of affection, though strangely mystical, craved his aid to divert her husband from his undertaking; for to her the East seemed to open up a better field for enterprise, and she accordingly expressed her earnest desire that her husband should be persuaded to turn his footsteps in that direction. Then, reverting to personal concerns, she says, "Every month hath its flower, and every season its contentment; and you great councillors are so full of new counsels as you are steady in nothing; but we poor souls that have bought sorrow at a high price, desire and can be pleased with the same fortunes we hold, fearing alterations will but

multiply misery, of which we have already felt sufficient."*

Instead of dissuading Raleigh from the Guiana expedition, Cecil gave him all the aid in his power, as did likewise Effingham, the Lord-admiral. The object of the voyage was not to discover Guiana, which had already been discovered, but to explore and subdue it for the sake of the immense riches it was supposed to contain. It was, in fact, the Realm of Gold imagined by Spanish fancy, in the attempt to reach and obtain possession of which multitudes had perished. In the opinion of some, it detracts from our estimate of Raleigh's good sense to admit that he believed in the fable of El Dorado, with the city and lake of Manoa. Whether we respect or despise him for his credulity, there is no doubt he was credulous, and expected to be wafted by the Orinoco into a region so profusely abounding in gold that whoever should possess it would be master or mistress of the world. For this reason he sought to insure the conquest to Elizabeth, and was ready to undergo any amount of toil, and encounter any danger, in order to make his peace with her, and to engage her in what he believed would prove the crowning enterprise of her reign.

The riches derived by Spain from Mexico and Peru were sufficient to justify the expectation of finding equal riches in Guiana, though the current reports concerning that country put on a fabulous aspect. The whole error probably originated in interpreting literally the poetical exaggeration of the natives, whose conceptions of number and quantity were those of children; they spoke of a few thousand men as more numerous than the leaves of the forest, and of an indefinite number of chains and crescents, as enough of the precious metal to convert a plain into a mountain. But Raleigh, it may be said, should not have yielded credence to stories which afterwards proved to be unfounded; this, however, is demanding of him a prescience beyond human nature, for

* Lady Raleigh to Cecil, February, 1594. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

though actual exploration demonstrated the non-existence of the great lake and city of Manoa, there was nothing in the nature of things to prove *à priori* the impossibility of their existence.

Whatever may be the judgment which his faith in this fiction compels us to form of him, such was his belief, and such continued to be his belief to his life's end.

In this persuasion, with a fleet of five ships, and the requisite number of pinnaces, barges, and small boats, with a gallant company of gentlemen, and adequate crews, he set sail from Plymouth on the 6th of February, 1595, and in little more than a month reached the island of Trinidad, where he took and destroyed the new city of San Jose, put a number of Spaniards to the sword, and took prisoner the governor, Don Antonio de Bereo, who had for many years been devoured, like himself, by the desire to subdue Guiana.

The extent of Bereo's knowledge, and the real nature of his belief, can by no means be ascertained from the information he gave Raleigh. Affecting ingenuousness, he told just as much of the truth as suited his own views and hopes; and his concealments were guided by the same principle. But his revelations, whether true or false, were not such as to quench in the Englishman the spirit of adventure; on the contrary, the wild enterprises, the dangers, the disasters, the alternate triumphs and reverses of the Spaniards, of which he spoke, only stimulated Raleigh's ardour; so that, leaving his ships riding at anchor on the shores of Trinidad, he proceeded with barges, boats, pinnaces, and launches to explore the sunderbunds of the Orinoco.

His narrative of what he did and suffered disappoints us, because nothing begets enthusiasm but success, and because his enterprise dwindles to nothing compared with that of many scores of Spaniards. Not that his daring was less than theirs, but that he was actuated by very different motives: they, in most cases, cared little or nothing about returning to Spain, but were animated by the hope of found-

ing kingdoms in the new world, over which they might rule either independently or with a show of allegiance to the Spanish crown. When their ambition took a lower flight, it was satisfied with heaps of gold, splendid estates and mansions, and an abundance of women, whom they might preserve or kill at their pleasure. Raleigh's mind was dominated by no such ideas. Whatever he might accomplish in Guiana, his real aim was to reconquer the confidence of Elizabeth, to rise at Court, to outshine his home rivals, but, above all, to establish the power of England in the southern continent of America.

As he toiled up the network of rivers descending into or flowing out of the Orinoco, through tempests of rain, accompanied by such lightning and thunder as none but travellers within the tropics can form a true conception of, the mirage of Manoa retreated before him. He saw, during short intervals of fine weather, many portions of a lovely country; green plains of apparently interminable extent, with here and there copses and groves, with immense herds of deer grazing between them. Mountains, the advanced posts of the Andes, occasionally presented themselves, sometimes clothed to their summits with wood, sometimes rocky and precipitous, with vast cataracts dashing down their sides. In the far background the snowy sierras of the Cordillera pierced the blue firmament in a thousand pinnacles, far too lofty to be reached by anything but the wings of the condor. He beheld the great river rolling and swelling like a sea between masses of vegetation luxuriant to rankness, and producing profusely all such flowers and fruits as delight the eye or tempt the palate in the near neighbourhood of the sun; but he saw no gold, he discovered no mines, he came in contact with no men or women powdered from head to foot with auriferous dust. Fables without end crowded upon him—

Antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills, whose heads touch heaven, ...

And of the cannibals that each other eat—
The anthropophagi—and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders.

Nay, more, the Red Men, with infantine inventiveness, or the white men, through ignorance of their language, heard snatches of the old fable, which two thousand years before had peopled the banks of the Thermodon and Tanais with a race of warlike women, without love or pity, who submitted through sheer necessity to bear children, but otherwise lived apart, delighting in savage pursuits, and abhorring the society of men.

From this mythe, which had been transplanted by the Spaniards from Asia to South America, the great river Orellana obtained the name of the Amazons.* In Hellenic poetry and art, the fable of the Amazons created a beautiful offspring, fragments of which still lie scattered over the civilized world; whereas Raleigh's Amazons served no other purpose than to expose him to obloquy. The setting in of the rainy season put a period to his explorations; and leaving behind him a man † and a boy to learn the language, that they might serve as interpreters at his proposed return in the following year, he set sail for England, taking with him a young Cacique as a specimen of those whom he sought to render subject to Elizabeth.

In the course of Raleigh's narrative frequent mention is made of a map or chart of the country, from the embouchures of the Orinoco northwards, including the affluents and feeders of the great river. This curious map, drawn by Raleigh's own hand, long supposed to be lost, I found in the archives of Simancas in perfect preservation, and signed with his name; at the right-hand corner, that is, in the north-west, are marked the baits that drew him to destruction—the lake and city of Manoa. It is to be regretted that this

* See an account by Davies of the countries on this river in Purchas, ii. 1287.

† This man, Francis Sparrey, wrote an account of Trinidad and Guiana, to be found in Purchas, ii. 1247.

was not engraved at the time, and published with the account of his explorations, which, though afterwards neglected, was then so popular that it went through two editions in one year, and was translated into almost every language in Europe.

Shakespeare, alive to everything going on around him in the world, makes allusion to Raleigh's Guiana voyage in three of his plays: Falstaff, in the 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' when sending his boy to Mrs Ford and Mrs Page, says—

> Sail like my pinnace to those golden shores.

Again, in the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' Panthino observes to Antonio that people wondered he did not send forth his son to gain experience in the world—

> While other men, of slender reputation,
> Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
> Some, to the wars, to try their fortune there,
> Some to discover islands far away.*

The reference made in 'Othello' to the marvels of Raleigh's narrative, which were doubtless much talked of at the time, every reader will remember, especially the remarkable lines already quoted.

Raleigh, being out of favour at Court, all his actions appeared awry to those who desired to make his exclusion perpetual. It signified little that his South American enterprise, instead of augmenting his opulence, had tended rather to diminish it; because, if he suffered in purse, his fame was daily acquiring greater proportions, so that it threw most of his rivals into the shade. People of all classes had his name in their mouths; the stage, as has been seen, resounded with his achievements; all London became astir as he walked through the streets, and it was therefore feared that Eliza-

* Malone, immediately after quoting these lines, falls into a strange error, observing that Sir Humphrey Gilbert had gone on a voyage of discovery the year before Raleigh's expedition to Guiana, whereas he died on the 9th of September, 1583. 'Prolegomena,' ii. 266.

beth, who above all things admired men of original views and daring conduct, might take him once more into favour, and thus cloud the prospects of those who had hitherto succeeded in exasperating her against him.

To inflict a wound on his reputation, a fiction, originating in petty malice, was circulated immediately on his return from the tropics: it was whispered that he had never in truth left England at all, but having concealed himself in the wilds of Cornwall, had there, with materials previously existing, fabricated the narrative which he called the 'Discovery of Guiana.' Whether any one believed this story we are not informed; his work was severely criticised, and in some respects deservedly, because he had not been sufficiently careful to sift the stories which were palmed upon his credulity. Yet no intelligent reader will fail to distinguish between the easiness of the author's faith and the disposition attributed to him by some to impose fictions upon others. He described what he had seen—he too faithfully repeated what he had heard; but it may be remarked that it took more than two centuries to dispel the fables which had led his imagination astray. Time and experience have only tended to exalt his character as an observer: his pictures of scenery are in fact so correct that Schomburgk,* who, as a commissioner, was employed by the British Government to survey the boundaries of Guiana, assures us he was constantly reminded while studying Raleigh's work of scenes and places with which he had years before been familiar.

Raleigh appears to have reached England towards the end of July, 1595, when he became to the Court an object of mixed admiration and jealousy. While his work was preparing for the press he lived about London in the style of a Spanish grandee from the Indies, exciting additional wonder by having as his companion a Guianian prince.

* Preface to his edition of 'The Discovery of Guiana,' for the Hakluyt Society.

Elizabeth still remained in her imperial sulks, though secretly, perhaps, relenting. She, nevertheless, still refused to the explorer of new realms reception at Court, but was in all likelihood as anxious as any of her subjects to learn how he had fared, what he had seen, and what new projects for the advancement of her glory and power now filled his seething brain. She would wait, however, yet a little longer before her lover of thirteen years ago should again kiss her hand, and bestride his courser before her at the head of her guard. Yet the effort possibly cost Elizabeth quite as much grief to make as Raleigh to endure ; but the Nemesis of her beauty was to be appeased, and like the ladies of chivalrous times, she determined to impose upon her erring knight far harder tasks than he had yet accomplished ere she would restore him to her favour.

CHAPTER XV.

CADIZ.

Raleigh's exclusion from political employment by no means prevented his opinions from exercising considerable influence over the measures of the Government, especially when the forces of the realm, whether by land or sea, were to be put in motion. This we learn from a communication of Sir Thomas Lake, who, writing on the 22nd of August, 1595, from Nonsuch to Lord Robert Sidney, then governor of Flushing, alludes to the meditated attack on Cadiz, but obscurely, because he says, "the post (office) was often visited," so that Elizabeth's ministers had already commenced that system, afterwards carried to so much perfection by Louis Quatorze. The project, however, was opposed, on the ground that it would occupy a long time, while the fleet might be wanted for home defence. The active sort, by whom Raleigh and his friends seem to be meant, wished to attack the ports of Spain; but their designs, he adds, "were checked from above," or crossed under hand, with great irritation on both sides.* The inference intended to be suggested is, that it was Elizabeth who thus checked the enthusiasm of her commanders, though probably she only bore the censure due to Burleigh's timidity.

In the household of Lord Robert Sidney there was always a birth or a christening, and as much policy as would have arranged the affairs of a principality was exhausted in

* 'Sidney Papers,' i. 344.

getting together suitable gossips: now it was Lady Sussex, or Lady Bedford, with the Earl of Southampton, who was solicited to accompany the baby to the font, and now, immorality being no objection, it was Lady Rich, with her lover Lord Mountjoy. Sometimes the Court was startled by a lady of high rank appearing in man's attire among the maids of honour, to present a petition to Elizabeth; and now everything was thrown into disorder by the illness of Burleigh, to visit whom the Queen lowered her lofty head-dress, saying, she would stoop for her friend, but not for the King of Spain. While these gallant doings were going on at Court, men were pilloried and had their ears cut off in Cheapside; rustics hopped in sacks from Charing Cross to St Paul's; mountebanks ascended on horseback to the top of the same cathedral; nobles and squires drew their rapiers upon each other, and fought in the streets, while priests were hanged, and recusants hunted down in troops by zealous Protestants, who thus hoped to become their heirs.

Meanwhile Philip's immense power made itself the terror of all Europe. It was nearly eight years since the destruction of his great Armada, and finding himself in possession of abundant resources, he reverted to his former policy. Elizabeth, though surrounded by able men, had, properly speaking, no foreign minister; Essex often acted in that capacity, but his attention was not directed exclusively to external affairs, and in any case he was too inexperienced to cope with the policy of Spain.

No one, therefore, knew what to expect, or how the Spanish forces were to be employed. Cardinal Albert, Archduke of Austria, having in the spring of 1596 been appointed governor of the Netherlands, marched into Picardy, predominance in which Spain then disputed with France. His ostensible object was to raise the siege of La Fere, then invested by the troops of Henri IV.; but suddenly changing his line of march, he approached Calais, which he assaulted with unusual fury. The news reached London on Sunday

morning, while the clergy were engaged in addressing their congregations; the services were interrupted, and the intelligence of approaching danger communicated to the people from the pulpit. Orders were instantly issued for the arming and equipment of a large force, to proceed under the command of Essex to the deliverance of Calais, while the roar of the Spanish artillery, which came booming, it is said, across the sea, and over the whole of Kent, as far as Greenwich, quickened the pulses of the English recruits. But the velocity of Albert's movements outstripped the speed of Elizabeth; before the slightest aid could be afforded to the French garrison, Calais fell, and the Spanish arms were firmly planted within twenty miles of the English coast.

Ministers now perceived that, unless some great blow could be struck in its defence, the English monarchy might be suddenly toppled from its foundations, and remembered the counsel given in the autumn of 1587, by Drake and Raleigh: which was, that instead of remaining inert, to be assailed in their own homes, the English should attack and destroy the enemy's forces in harbour. Now then an English fleet, with the aid of a Dutch contingent, was fitted out, consisting of a hundred and fifty-six ships of war, transports and tenders; but instead of carrying an army of nearly forty thousand men, as Philip's Armada had done, Elizabeth's land forces on board the fleet scarcely amounted to eight thousand. The difference, however, was in the men; for pompous grandees, priests, monks, and confessors were substituted such men as Lord Howard of Effingham, Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Francis Vere, and the Earl of Essex.

One of the features of those days was the deficiency of intelligence—no steamers running against wind and tide, no electric wires palpitating along the surface of the earth, carried almost with the swiftness of thought tidings of approaching danger. The Spanish Government heard that in the southern and western parts of England great guns were

cast, mariners pressed, war ships collected; but through overweening confidence in its own power, rested satisfied with the persuasion that the heretics were merely mustering for their own defence.

Though the fleet was to assemble at Plymouth, the necessary ships and men were slow in arriving, some being elsewhere with Effingham, others with Raleigh. Essex himself repaired early to Plymouth, where he chafed and fretted at the absence of his admiral and rear-admiral. On the 16th of April, six days after the fall of Calais, Effingham wrote to Cecil, urging him to hasten Raleigh's departure, in a tone which seemed to imply that he shared the persuasion then commonly entertained that the Rear-admiral had some politic end to serve by delay. "I was aboard my ship," he says, "in the road two miles off, when we heard of the loss of Calais. I referred all to the Earl, who I knew would certify her Majesty. This morning, being come ashore to visit the Duc (de Bouillon) we had an alarm that the Spanish fleet was in sight, which brought every man with all diligence aboard, so as I had not seen the like, and ships so soon under sail; but the fleet proved but ships that came from Bordeaux and Rochelle . . . . . I pray you hasten away Sir W. Raleigh. I hope my Lord Thomas Howard will be [here] this night, and my son Southwell, if they be not come away, hasten them."*

This was a period of great excitement throughout the country, for a second Armada was expected before our own fleet, intended to intercept it, could put to sea. The belief still gained ground that the enterprise was delayed through Raleigh's slackness; both at Plymouth and at Court discord prevailed. Sir Anthony Shirley, having reviewed the forces at Plymouth, foretold that the expedition would end in smoke, his mind having been embittered by Lord Effingham, who took five ships and five hundred men from the force he himself had collected against the island of San Tome. This

* Lord Admiral to Cecil, April 16th, 1596. Add. MSS. 6177.

enterprise, however, proved as unsuccessful as his prediction.*

No influential man ever left the Court without losing ground; for his back was no sooner turned than his adversaries began to demonstrate the correctness of the maxim, *Les absens ont toujours tort.* Essex experienced the truth of the observation; for his enemies—and they were not a few—at once exerted their utmost ingenuity to prejudice Elizabeth against him. Among these was Henry Brooke, soon to be Lord Cobham, with whom Raleigh's fortunes were unhappily bound up. The Earl himself adopted a tone of swagger in speaking of the Cadiz expedition, saying, he would carry it through or become a monk at an hour's notice. His language, if not his opinion, was influenced by the Papists who flocked about him, and it would have been fortunate both for himself and for many others had circumstances constrained him to cover his wild head with a cowl. Meanwhile his place of foreign secretary passed into the hands of Henry Brooke, to whom the Duc de Bouillon was directed to address any communications he might have to make to the English Government.

Raleigh's absence from the fleet still continuing, and no one being able to account for it, rumours of all kinds got abroad. Essex's friends displayed the greatest diligence in circulating unfavourable interpretations. Writing to his brother Francis in May, Anthony Bacon says, "I doubt not you have heard of Mr Fulk Greville's employment to carry to the two generals the royal benediction; and yet Sir Walter Raleigh's slackness and stay, by the way, is not thought to be upon sloth or negligence, but upon pregnant design, which will be brought forward very shortly, and found to be according to the French proverb, '*Fils ou fille.*'"†

Another of Essex's adherents, the Popish spy, Standen, writing to Anthony Bacon from Exeter, May 18th, says that Essex was put to insupportable expense by the fleet being detained at Plymouth, through the fault, as he sug-

* Birch, i. 490, 491. † Birch, i. 486.

gested, of Sir Walter Raleigh. The object of these complaints evidently was to keep up in Elizabeth's mind the ill-feeling she was still believed to cherish against Bessy Throgmorton's lover.

And what in reality was Raleigh doing all this while? Writing from Northfleet to Cecil on the 4th of May, he states satisfactory reasons for the "slackness" objected to him. "The ships that remain above are six; the great fly-boat of London called the 'George,' another called the 'Jacob of Agarflout,' a third, the 'Joshua of Horn,' a fourth, and some others. Pope, the marshal of the Admiralty, can inform Mr Burrows, for Pope pressed all the ships; he can also inform you how little her Majesty's authority is respected, for as fast as we press men one day, they run away another, and say they will not serve. I beseech you, sir, to vouchsafe to send for Pope of St Katherine's, who hath taken great pains already, and to tell him that I have remembered his service, and he will do more than any. There are at Gravesend, and between that and sea, some twenty-two sail, those above, that are of great draught of water, cannot tide it down, for they must take the high water, and dare not move after an hour's ebb, until they be past Barking Shelf, and now the wind is so strong as it is impossible to turn down, or to warp down, or to tow. I cannot write to our general this time, for the pursuivant found me in a country village, a mile from Gravesend, hunting after runaway mariners, and dragging in the mire from ale-house to ale-house, and could get no paper, but that the pursuivant had this piece.

"Sir, by the living God, there is no king, nor queen, nor general, nor any else, can take more care than I do to be gone; but I humbly pray you but to speak with Mr Burrows, and let him be sent for afterward before my Lord Chamberlain, that they may hear him speak, whether any man can get down with this wind or no, which will satisfy them of me.

"If this strong wind last, I will ride to Blackwall, to speak with you and kiss your hand."*

Raleigh arrived at Plymouth on the 21st of May, bringing with him Charles Chester, Sir Edward Cooke, one of Bacon's cousins, and his brother Anthony Cooke, who likewise belonged to the expedition. With Raleigh, or before him, came his wife's brother, Arthur Throgmorton, whom Essex's satellites called a hot-headed youth, because, on occasion of a dispute at table between the Rear-admiral and the Lord-marshal, Arthur took, as was natural, the side of his brother-in-law; but Essex's Catholic spy, who never lost an opportunity of censuring Raleigh or his friends, relates that, "Yesternight, at table in drink, in the presence of my Lords Generals, and the Flemings of the Low Country fleet, there passed some words, the matter being taken against the Marshal by Arthur Throgmorton, a hot-headed youth, who disborded in such words as my Lords commanded him from the table; so that for all this voyage, I see already the fire kindled that must consume us inwardly." However, though Throgmorton appeared most forward in the quarrel, Raleigh was the cause; yet, in their resentment, the generals dismissed the young man from the service, but fearing, probably, the steps which Raleigh might be inclined to take, they restored him to his rank, and for the gallantry he displayed at Cadiz he was knighted by the hands of Essex himself.

The fears occasioned by the disagreement between Raleigh and Vere proved groundless, for though the latter might have been easily provoked to risk the interests of the service, the former was far too anxious to regain the favour of Elizabeth to sacrifice the slightest chance. His behaviour, indeed, was regulated by so much prudence, that the Earl's adherents, who would have been only too glad to witness the contrary, set it down to craft. "Sir Walter's carriage to my Lord of Essex," observes Standen, "is with the cun-

* Add. MSS. 6177. B. M.

ningest respect and deepest humility that ever I saw or have trowed."*

This writer, a pupil of the Jesuits, doubtless understood Raleigh's policy, and the circumstances which compelled him to adopt it. Subordinated to inferior men by the Queen's caprice, and barely permitted to hold a command in the navy at all, he was under the necessity of conciliating his enemies by feigned deference. Had Elizabeth been the fine judge of men which many suppose her to have been, instead of writing prayers for the fleet, and amorous letters to Essex, she would have placed the naval strength of her kingdom under the direction of the greatest seaman then afloat, which would have enabled her at once to humble Philip, and turn the golden tide of commerce from the harbours of Cadiz, Lisbon, and Corunna, into those of London and Plymouth.

The arrangements for the government of the fleet, however, were ill calculated to insure that cheerful co-operation between its commanders, without which signal success could hardly be reckoned upon: the chief authority, divided between Essex and Lord Charles Howard, was too equally balanced to give either of those leaders undoubted supremacy: it was said, indeed, that to Essex belonged the principal authority by land, and to Effingham the chief command at sea; but unless in fights on the ocean, this clearly conferred on Essex the lead, since upon entering harbours, and disembarking troops, Effingham's authority terminated. Between the Rear-admiral Raleigh, and the Lord-marshal Vere, there existed the same ground of dispute respecting superiority.

All things being in readiness, the fleet on the 1st of June sailed from Plymouth with sealed orders. Desirous of taking the enemy by surprise, they captured as they went along such small vessels as might have conveyed intelligence of their approach, but when in the latitude of Lisbon a fly-boat, which was sought to be taken by the 'Swan,' effected

* Birch, ii. 15.

its escape, and made towards the mouth of the Tagus. It was therefore not doubted that the designs of the English would be made generally known, and the enemy put upon their guard; but fortunately the 'John and Frances,' a ship of London, fell in with the fly-boat, and made prize of her almost close to the shore.*

The narrators of such transactions, influenced by different motives, by love, by hatred, by national prejudice, by ignorance, necessarily differ widely from each other; but perhaps no affair of this kind was ever so diversely described as the Cadiz expedition. According to some the English Armada flashed upon the devoted city suddenly, before the slightest preparations had been made for resistance; while others maintain it had been seen off Cape St Vincent, engaged in action with a Spanish ship. A friar who was in Cadiz at the time, and having been well used by our countrymen, speaks of them with the warmth of gratitude, observes that the fleet was first beheld by the sentinels on duty, about two o'clock on Sunday morning, and that as the day broke it neared the shore in full sail, all the ships dressed with colours and streamers.

On Saturday† the 20th, Raleigh, in the 'Warspite,' had been ordered to advance before the fleet‡ to intercept such Spanish vessels as might attempt to pass out from San Lucar or Cadiz. In his absence it was resolved by Essex and Effingham that the city should be first taken, in order that the guns of its forts and batteries might be silenced before the fight with the ships should be commenced. In pursuance of this plan, Raleigh, at his return on Sunday afternoon, found the operation of disembarking the troops actually in progress, though the billows ran so high before the south wind that the boats were every moment in danger of being swamped.

* Monson, 'Naval Tracts' in Churchill, iii. 28.
† Birch, ii. 46; Monson, iii. 28.
‡ Raleigh, Works, viii. 668.

Proceeding first to Essex's ship, the 'Repulse,' Raleigh, in presence of all the colonels and naval captains, strongly protested against the disembarkation, pointing out that a large number of the soldiers must inevitably be lost, as many had already been. To this Essex replied that the plan was that of the Lord-admiral, who refused to hazard an engagement with the Spanish fleet unless the city should be first captured. With Essex's consent Raleigh repaired to the 'Ark Royal,' where he argued the point with Effingham so successfully that it was agreed to postpone the attack until the morning, and to begin with the ships. Upon this Raleigh again got into his boat, and rowed towards the 'Repulse,' where he saw Essex leaning over the bulwarks, and shouted out to him from below the success of his mission, at which Essex for joy threw his cap into the sea. Several officers, however, desirous of creating a high idea of their valour, blamed the delay obtained by Raleigh's representations, and would have had the action commence at once; yet Essex and the Lord-admiral, perceiving the absurdity of such a course, adhered to the policy of the great seaman.

By the time the soldiers and mariners had regained their ships, the sun had set, and the business of deliberation commenced. Both by land and sea the English are fond, on important occasions, of taking counsel in the night. With the forts on Cadiz Island, the galleys, the argosies, almost within range of gun, the English decided upon their plan of operations. Never did braver men meet to deliberate on conflict with the foe—Essex, Effingham, Howard, Carew, Southwell, the two Cliffords, all eagerly coveted the honour of leading the vanguard on the morrow, which, however, by universal consent, at his pressing entreaty, was assigned to Raleigh.* His most strenuous rival for the post of honour was Lord Thomas Howard, but after much contention and

* Essex, 'Relation of Cadiz Action,' in Birch.

argument the Vice-admiral gave way, and the explorer of Guiana was left master of the position.*

While the English passed the night in these martial discussions, what was going on in Cadiz?

From Xeres, from San Lucar, from Arcos, from Chillana,† considerable bodies of troops, horse and foot, had, at the requisition of the Corregidor, hastened, some with arms, others without, to what they regarded rather as a banquet than a battle. The mariners of the fleet had likewise left their ships to sleep on shore, where they devoted the hours to merriment and licentiousness. Nearly the whole population was in the streets, which, lighted up by lamps, by tapers, by torches, by blazing tar-barrels, looked as brilliant as by day,‡ while music, singing, and dancing went on as upon the eve of some religious festival. The friars from the monasteries, in cowl and cassock, passed to and fro among the crowds, inwardly grieved at the little heed paid by the populace to the coming storm.

Next morning, as they stood upon the ramparts, they beheld the English fleet weigh anchor, marshal its strength, and then in magnificent order, with bellying sails and colours flying, prepare to swoop into the harbour. § At the head of this terrible array came Sir Walter Raleigh in the 'Warspite,' Lord Thomas Howard in the 'Nonpareil,' Sir Francis Vere in the 'Rainbow,' Sir George Carew in the 'Mary Rose,' Sir Conyers and Sir Alexander Clifford in the 'Dreadnought,' while Effingham and Essex, in the 'Ark Royal' and the 'Repulse,' pressed upon the rear of the

* Effingham's 'Relation,' in Birch, ii. 53.

† Birch, ii. 56. "Xeres alone furnished two thousand men, but so ill supplied that it was necessary to provide them with powder, lead, and matches." 'Relation,' p. 237. The arquebuses and other arms used against our countrymen at Cadiz may still be seen in the Armeria at Madrid.

‡ 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz.' MS. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

§ For a knowledge of what took place in Cadiz, I am indebted to a curious little narrative written by a nameless friar, entitled 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz, año de 1596,' p. 173. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

column, eager to bring their vast bulk as near as possible to the impending fray.

Let the reader figure to himself an immense haven,* entering from the Atlantic into the land, and extending eight or ten miles from north-west to south-east, having the main on the left hand, and the large flat island on which Cadiz is situated on the right. From this expanse of water two rivers open up between salt marshes an entrance into the interior, while at the southern extremity of the island, a narrow though deep channel communicates with the ocean. Over the entrance to this channel a series of arches, called the Puente del Suaco, was then thrown. Beneath the surface of the calm water lurked numerous shoals, divided from each other by narrow channels, to thread which demanded the skill of the most experienced pilots; for the slightest deviation to the right or to the left brought ships sailing inward aground.

That St Barnabas day, so often the brightest in the year, was likewise the brightest of Raleigh's life; surging forwards with crowded sail, in the van of some of the bravest men ever sent forth to conflict by England. As the 'Warspite' swung into the bay, the forts and some of the galleons opened fire upon it; but Raleigh disdained to answer them otherwise than by a blare of trumpets. When, however, he had reached a position which he judged most convenient, he laid aside his reserve, and poured broadside after broadside into the galleys and galleons within range. Forming the principal object of the enemy's fire† for three hours, the 'Warspite' remained almost perpetually involved in smoke, while its great guns belched forth thunder, peal for peal

* By the courtesy of the gentlemen of the Ministerio de Marina at Madrid, I was enabled to consult numerous ancient charts of Cadiz Bay, though none so old as 1596. There is, however, in our own State Paper Office, a beautiful little chart made at the time, which all interested in the topography of that remarkable harbour may consult with advantage.

† Yet Monson, who commanded under Essex in the 'Repulse,' seeks to disparage Raleigh and put forward himself. 'Naval Tracts,' iii. 29.

with those of the foe, till Cadiz with all its waters was shaken as if by an earthquake.

It had been agreed in the night that the 'San Felipe,' the greatest galleon of Spain, which Raleigh had singled out for his victim, should, after having been crippled by the guns, be taken by boarding, and Effingham had promised his Rear-admiral to send him two fly-boats for the purpose. But the fly-boats not making their appearance, and the critical moment rapidly approaching in which Raleigh foresaw the mariners would desert and fire the 'San Felipe,' he sprang into his barge, and rowing to the 'Ark Royal,' demanded permission to board with the 'Warspite.' This request being granted, he hastened back, to find that during his fifteen minutes' absence Vere and Howard had shot ahead of the 'Warspite,' which, from being the first ship of the vanguard, had thus become the third.

To regain his post, Raleigh slipped anchor, and thrusting the 'Warspite' between the 'Lion' and the 'Rainbow,' got before both, and then threw his ship right across the channel, so that no one could again outstrip him for that day.

The science of manœuvring, which has reached so great perfection in our days, was then little understood—valour and fiery intrepidity supplied its place, and snatched victory from the slippery pinnacle of danger. This was the Balaklava charge of the ocean. From seventeen Spanish ships of war, drawn up in half moon before the city's ramparts, with here and there open intervals through which fort and curtain poured their round shot, showers of flaming metal descended upon the English ships, where all was enthusiasm and eager rivalry. Instead of remaining aloof, guiding by his intelligence the energies of his officers, Effingham deserted the 'Ark Royal,' which proved too bulky to pass the channel, and threw himself into the 'Nonpareil,' with the Lord Thomas Howard. "My Lord-general Essex," says Raleigh, "thinking his ship's sides stronger than the rest, thrust the 'Dreadnought' aside, and came next to the

'Warspite' on the left hand, ahead all that rank but my Lord Thomas. The marshal, while we had no leisure to look behind us, secretly fastened a rope on my ship's side towards him, to draw himself up equally with me; but some of my company advertising me thereof, I caused it to be cut off, and so he fell back into his place."

Raleigh, Essex, and Howard now prepared to board the 'San Felipe,' which being perceived by those on board, led to the catastrophe he had apprehended. Dreading above all things the fate of falling into the hands of the English, the crews of the 'San Felipe' and the 'San Tome' set their ships on fire, and endeavoured to escape to the shore. "The spectacle," says Raleigh, "was very lamentable on their side, for many drowned themselves, many half burnt leapt into the water, very many hanging by the ropes' ends by the ships' sides under the water even to the lips, many swimming with grievous wounds stricken under water and put out of their pain, and withal so huge a fire, and such tearing of the ordnance in the 'San Felipe' and the rest when the fire came to them, as if any man had a desire to see hell itself it was there most lively figured."

What followed was perfectly in keeping with this picture; the English, as is their wont, spared, and endeavoured to save, the vanquished; but the Flemings, though by no means distinguished during the battle,* now rushed forward to enjoy the delight of slaughter, by despatching all such of the enemy as were swimming for their lives, till they were beaten off by Raleigh and Effingham. The fragments of the Spanish fleet, seeing that all hope was lost, sought to provide for their own safety, some by running up the Guadalete, some by taking to the river of Puerta Real, while others making for the southern channel, ran their prows against the bridge, broke down its

* Monson indeed affirms that they had received orders not to fire, which is incredible. 'Naval Tracts,' iii. 29.

middle arches, and effected in that manner their escape into the ocean.

Writers often forget that to disparage the enemy is to take from your own merit, because if they in reality be cowardly and base, there can be little glory in overcoming them. At Cadiz, the Spaniards displayed, by sea at least, great courage and no inconsiderable skill, resisting their assailants during seven whole hours, and manœuvring their ships with as much science as their unwieldy bulk would permit.

When the fleet had been defeated and scattered, Essex, upon whom as General the chief command now devolved, prepared to land and assault the city.* The force actually disembarked consisted of three thousand soldiers and eight hundred mariners;† but a large portion of the former having been detached to perform a most impolitic service—that of breaking down the bridge del Suaco—which, though they knew it not, had been already destroyed by the galleys, there remained about two thousand three hundred men with whom to storm the city.

When those within the walls beheld the English descend from their ships, the authorities sent forth a considerable body of horse and foot to prevent their advance. A fight took place, in which the Spaniards were speedily worsted, though not without many slain on both sides; the routed Spaniards fled towards the city, across a sandy plain‡ some three miles in length, and on their approach found the gates shut in their faces, lest the enemy should enter with them. Cadiz was then proved to be wretchedly fortified, for the

* On this occasion upwards of a hundred friars ranged themselves among the defenders of Cadiz, and according to the testimony of one of their own order, whose veracity I take to be indisputable, displayed far more courage than any of the others. 'Relacion,' &c., p. 174. MS. Bib. Nac. Madrid.

† The Spanish 'Relacion' makes the number of the assailants amount to five thousand, p. 237.

‡ Monson, iii. 30.

cavalry, dismounting, made their way with the infantry over an old wall into the suburbs.* The English pursuing the flying foe in part followed their example, Essex among the foremost, and Sir Francis Vere having broken open one of the gates, the whole of our force entered.

During four hours Cadiz presented the usual features of a sacked city: the soldiers breaking into houses, convents, monasteries, churches, and half frantic with wine, putting on the copes, chasubles, surplices, cassocks, cowls, and other vestments of the priests and friars, and dancing about in the streets in them, amid the shouts and laughter of their comrades.

From time to time some of them, especially the Flemings, shouted out, "Hang the Pope! Hang the Pope!"† which was thought to mean hang the clergy, and this belief spread terror through the whole city, especially when they beheld the havoc and devastation perpetrated in the churches, where pictures, crucifixes, images of saints, vases, candlesticks, and ornaments of all kinds were torn from the walls, or snatched from the altars, and dashed to pieces against the floor.

All the nuns, secular ladies, and friars took refuge in one vast church, where they remained during the sack and pillage throughout the following night, and nearly the whole of the next day, without meat or drink, a prey to agonizing terror, since it was impossible to foresee what was to be their fate. A friar who was present describes the scene in very forcible and plain language, dwelling particularly on the offensive odours produced by the crowding together of so great a multitude in one building, during the hottest season of the year, while it was impossible to preserve either decency or decorum.

Elsewhere spectacles still more horrible presented themselves; numbers, we are told, took refuge with their plate, money, and jewels, in the cathedral; but the soldiers, mad-

* 'Relacion,' *ut supra*.

† 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Cadiz,' p. 352.

dened with thirst of plunder, broke in after them, and put so many to the sword that a large portion of the wealth of Cadiz remained till we left the city buried beneath heaps of corpses.*

Much surprise was excited among Elizabeth's subjects by the courtesy with which the nuns and other ladies were treated by the conquerors. Their wonder would have been less had they reflected that the principal English officers were either Catholics or under the influence of Catholics. This was the case with Effingham and Howard, and, if Essex had not been actually reconciled to the Romish church, he suffered himself then, as afterwards, on a far worse occasion, to be guided by the infamous person who, by portentous efforts of vice, if not by murder, had become his father-in-law; besides, there was a strong spirit of chivalry in the high-bred nobles of England, most of all in the Queen's former favourite, Raleigh, who had always piqued himself on being the very flower of courtesy. Under the ægis of this sentiment the nuns, ladies, children, friars, with their jewels and money, were marched down in a body to the sea, under the personal command of Effingham, who, standing on the beach, watched their embarkation in boats and launches; when they were ready to put off, he roared out his commands to the sailors, adding, with an oath, that he would hang at the yard-arm any one who should lay a finger in violence on lady or nun.† They were then rowed over to Puentar Santa Maria, where they remained unmolested.

Raleigh, we are told by Effingham, assisted actively in disembarking the troops; after which, having received during the action so severe a wound that he was unable to walk, the flesh of his leg being almost torn from the bone by a splinter, he could not join the assailants in the storm. Yet the love of plunder or of excitement being irresistible, he

* Letter from an English spy employed by Essex in Spain. Birch, ii. 125.

† The friar informs us that the nuns were embarked in a separate launch with the Dean, who took charge of them. 'Relacion,' *ut supra*, p. 354.

got some of his mariners to carry him on their shoulders into the mêlée. What he witnessed soon convinced him that he had taken a false step. Drunken soldiers and sailors, freed in an enemy's city from the restraints of discipline, were not likely to show much respect to a wounded officer, so that crowded, hustled, and pushed to and fro by plunder-seekers, he was soon glad to return to his ship. Essex, Effingham, Howard, Vere, with all the others who were sound in limb, actuated by the same feelings as the soldiers, flew about Cadiz, appropriating to themselves the largest and richest palaces, from which the inferior plunderers were effectually warned off.

While its commanders were thus engaged the English fleet lay almost deserted, and the chance of making booty of far greater value than all the city contained slipped from their hands. Forty carracks and other vessels, laden with merchandise worth more than twelve millions sterling, might, if proper precautions had been taken, have been then captured; two millions sterling were, on the evening of the sack, offered for their ransom, but neither General nor Admiral being to be found, and Raleigh possessing no authority to treat without them, the golden opportunity was lost, for the Duke of Medina Sidonia set fire to the carracks, so that they were utterly consumed with all the riches they contained.

Irritated by disappointment as well as by his wound, Raleigh, without the least power to interfere, beheld the accomplishment of this destruction from the deck of the 'Warspite,' chafing more and more as one column of flame after another revealed to him the fate of the carracks, which, could they have been secured, would have rendered Elizabeth the richest sovereign in Europe. Meanwhile, in Cadiz, the principal inhabitants took refuge in the citadel till the following morning, when they hung out a white flag and offered to capitulate on reasonable terms.* The terms im-

* MS. Relation of the winning of Cales. State Paper Office.

posed upon them were not hard; being only such a ransom as they could easily pay. With the money thus obtained, and the plate, gold, jewels, silks, spices, works of art, and other costly merchandise found in the palaces of the nobles and the spacious mansions and warehouses of the opulent citizens, the officers of both fleet and army were so profusely enriched that no further service could be expected from them. It was different with Essex, whose appetite for treasure and glory having been violently stimulated by the good fortune which had befallen him, and his mind being haunted, moreover, by foreknowledge of the angry reproaches he knew he should hear, as well from the nation as from Elizabeth, for neglecting to save the carracks from conflagration, he proposed that the fleet should repair to the Azores, in the hope of intercepting the plate fleet from the West Indies.

To discuss the merits of his proposition he called a council of war, in which his scheme was peremptorily set aside. Under ordinary circumstances the projected enterprise might have been feasible, but in the actual state of the fleet, gorged with wealth and demoralized by success, it was utterly impracticable. Some urged as arguments against it the deficiency of provisions, and those premonitory symptoms of disease which were discoverable in many ships; but the true objections lay in the obvious disinclination of officers and men to engage in any new undertaking till they should have enjoyed at home the fruits of their past victory. How to make the most of their gains occupied all minds. Elizabeth, they knew, would send down commissioners to all the principal ports of England to seize upon and store up for equitable distribution all the plunder* which should be brought away, and to elude this process both naval and military commanders chartered small barks, which they directed to put in by night upon unfrequented parts of

* On the variety of the plunder obtained, see Report of Goods, &c., August 10th and 11th, 1596. State Paper Office.

the coast, whence they might convey their booty to places of concealment.* With men in such a frame of mind it would have been madness to attempt any new enterprise, unless it were at once easy and productive of gain. On their way home, therefore, they voluntarily landed at different points on the coast of Portugal, where they augmented their stores without danger. At Fero, which they found deserted by its inhabitants, they took from the episcopal palace the library of the famous Bishop Osorius,† which was presented either by Essex or Raleigh to Sir Thomas Bodley, and formed the nucleus of the Bodleian.

* Birch, ii. 97. † Monson, 'Naval Tracts,' iii. 32.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESTORATION TO FAVOUR.

Some have imagined that in uniting with Effingham in opposing Essex's plan for extending the operations of the fleet to the Azores, Raleigh was actuated by unworthy motives. Such was the view taken at the time by Anthony Bacon, who, after quoting from the Vulgate a saying of Christ, observes that "Sir Walter Raleigh hath enough of these *woes* laid upon for him for having persuaded my Lord-admiral from joining with my Lord of Essex, and persuaded an untimely, unlucky, and most dishonourable return."* The invectives against Raleigh were based obviously on the belief that he was a sort of dictator in the fleet, swaying the opinions of admirals and commanders at his pleasure, and that he was wholly reckless of incurring the rancorous hatred of Essex. Policy at least would have restrained him from such a course. He remembered only too well that he was still in disgrace with Elizabeth, and that if he failed to subdue the hostility of the favourite, his exclusion from Court might be perpetual. Sir Anthony Standen, one of Essex's Popish adherents, pointed out sarcastically, on the eve of the expedition, the extreme deference shown by Raleigh to the Earl; the same policy regulated his conduct when he prevented a premature disembarkation. He obtained from the Earl, as well as from

* Letter to Dr Hawkins, September 1st, 1596. Birch, ii. 122.

the Lord-admiral, probably in consequence of his courteous bearing, the much-coveted honour of leading the vanguard in the attack; if, therefore, his conscientious convictions led him to coincide with Effingham in dissuading further operations, it is attributing too paltry a feeling to Essex to assume that he regarded Ralcigh with a vindictive eye for expressing his opinion honestly; and that, in fact, he was above this meanness will presently appear. In the fleet, both among officers and men, no one was more popular than Raleigh. We have seen with what enthusiasm he was greeted by the mariners when, after emerging from the Tower, he trod the deck of the 'Madre de Dios' at Dartmouth; and this marked preference from those with whom he had fought and bled in part at least enabled him to dispense with the smiles of more powerful individuals on shore. Even the basest of Essex's creatures bore testimony, however reluctantly, to the equitable bearing of Raleigh towards him. "These lords," says Standen, "have created sixty-four knights, and Sir Walter Raleigh observes my Lord-general out of all . . . . owns, I say, you can lay no honour upon him that he hath not deserved, for without him, I know what, and with him, I know what also."*

From this obscure jargon we may discover the fact that Essex was at the moment content with Raleigh, for the underling only wrote what he knew to be the opinion of his superior. Others gave their testimony to Raleigh's conduct from different motives. An officer in the fleet, who had probably fought by his side, writing from the scene of action, animadverts upon the partiality shown by Essex, Vere, and others to the soldiers, so that not even a house was awarded to any naval officer "under the degree of Sir Walter Raleigh," who, however, the writer says, "had not much, although he deserved very much in this, that he fought so bravely with the Spanish fleet while they were overthrown. If our sovereign mistress had seen it, it would,

* Letter to Anthony Bacon from Cadiz, July 5th, 1596. Birch, ii. 49.

I think, have been held a sufficient expiation for all his faults whatsoever. I have always held him to be wise, and now I am *testigo de vista* that he is a very valiant seaman."*

At Court, Essex, in spite of his popular manners, had left behind him numerous enemies, who strove to damage him in the opinion of Elizabeth, and in part succeeded. These, from the double motive of hatred to him and friendliness to Raleigh, indulged in eloquent eulogiums on the services of the fleet, which their hero shared with Effingham, Lord Thomas Howard, Southwell, the two Cliffords, and others. Essex's supporters could not mistake the tendency of these manœuvres. Anthony Bacon undertook to sound Essex's praises in Scotland, La Fontaine in France, and Bodley in the Low Countries, while Cecil, with the authority of his place and genius, counteracted their intrigues in France by sending to Henri Quatre a history of the Cadiz expedition, in which Essex, as his friends thought, had little justice done him. To set matters right, therefore, in that quarter, Reynolds, one of the Earl's private secretaries, fabricated a different account, which, through the contrivance of La Fontaine, who kept back Cecil's despatch, reached the French king before, or at least by the same courier, with the secretary's relation.

Through such a web of rivalry and intrigue it is difficult to discern the motives or movements of queen or ministers. Elizabeth, now paling before the shadows of the grave, began reluctantly to discover the coldness—almost approaching to aversion—with which she was regarded by many who professed the utmost warmth of affection. Among these Essex was chief. It was natural that he should not love a lady who, for age, might have been his grandmother; but interest and ambition prompting him to affect love, he secretly despised himself for his own hypocrisy, and hated her as the cause of it. Part of this truth, though not the whole, already dawned upon Elizabeth, who became weak

* Letter to Sir John Stanhope from Cadiz. Birch, ii. 96, 97.

and lost her freedom of action in the presence of her idol, but recovered self-command when he was removed. It will be remembered how seven years before she was maddened by his desertion; his absence had now come to be almost a relief, because it diminished the infatuation that degraded her.

Without the discernment, the abilities, or the mental grasp of Leicester, which had enabled him to sway Elizabeth's mind when it was strongest, Essex sought, but often failed, to sway that mind when it had been weakened by age. The cause of his failure was insolent vanity. He might nearly always have won Elizabeth to compliance by the use of persuasion, whereas, thinking to prevail by bravado and bluster, he met with checks and refusals, which wounded his self-love, and rendered him vindictive. Before his departure for Cadiz he made an effort to snatch the sceptre of prerogative from the Queen's hands, and to determine in her stead who should be Secretary of State; she resisted his interference, but postponed, till he should be absent, taking any decisive step; she then, however, set aside his nominee, Sir Thomas Bodley, and gave the place to the man of her own choice, Sir Robert Cecil. Acquainted with all the circumstances of this affair, and stimulated by a thousand other motives, Cecil hated Essex, and the sentiment was only rendered the more deadly by the frequent necessity of concealing it. Beneath the mask of playfulness, and jovial unconcern, the little secretary studied the weak places in Essex's character, and professing sometimes friendship, sometimes indifference, always held himself in readiness to plunge his weapon on the first occasion that presented itself into his overbearing enemy's vitals.

The Cadiz expedition, though successful, had yet, throughout its continuance, been disfigured by so many blunders, that it offered numerous coigns of vantage to criticism. Essex knew this, as well as that the blame of nearly every misadventure would, if the truth were revealed,

fasten upon himself; he therefore cooked up a partial relation in the hope of gathering the first-fruits of public opinion, and sent it by his secretary Cuffe to England, that Reynolds, Bacon, or some other of his obsequious friends, might put it forth to the world, and so transfer Raleigh's laurels to his own brow. For this purpose every variety of intrigue was put in play to get the false account published, so as to prejudice the ear of the nation before the true account could appear. The judgment of the council was first attempted to be warped, then an assault was made on the integrity of its several members, more especially of the Archbishop of Canterbury; but Elizabeth, having issued her prohibition, under pain of death, to publish the relation written by Essex under the name of Cuffe, the plotters were checkmated. As justice and decency enjoined, the Government resolved to wait till it should be in possession of a thorough knowledge of the affair before putting forward any statement to the public. Accurate information gradually came in from several quarters; Sir Anthony Ashley, despatched by the commanders to lay before Elizabeth and her council a true account of the expedition, performed his duty with honest frankness, awarding, as posterity still awards, the credit for highest valour and prudence to Sir Walter Raleigh. This Essex's partisans stigmatized as treachery, because Ashley, for his deserts, had been knighted at Cadiz; others, however, had come in before him with the same version of the story, so that the whole Court, council, and country became rapidly impregnated with admiration for Raleigh.

This, as might have been foreseen, produced its full effect upon Elizabeth, in whose breast the old feeling for her Captain of the Guard revived, though in public she shrouded her partiality under the disguise of general terms. Her anger against Essex arose, perhaps, in part, from the reckless lavishness with which he had squandered among his friends and dependents the wealth which should have

found its way into the public treasury; while the men most distinguished for valour, and naval and military skill, had to content themselves, like her, with a miserable pittance of the plunder. Essex's friends had, therefore, but cold comfort to meet him with on his return. His secretary, the day before his landing at Plymouth, wrote, saying: "Her Majesty was wholly possessed with discontented humours, which the Earl's backward friends nourished by all means possible, suggesting that she had been abused in the giving away of so rich a spoil, and extenuating the worthiness of the action to his Lordship's great disadvantage, and yet attributing the uttermost to the *sea-faction*," * a term by which Raleigh, Effingham, his son-in-law Southwell, and Lord Thomas Howard were designated.

In spite of the elements of discord and mutual aversion existing beneath the surface, revealed by the facts above enumerated, the appearance of good-will between Raleigh and Essex was still maintained. While the Earl posted to Court, and the Lord-admiral moved forward with the fleet, Raleigh, the loadstone of whose affections lay in Dorsetshire, put in at Weymouth on the 12th of August. How he journeyed to Sherbourne Castle to meet his beautiful wife and son is not known; but whatever may have been the joy of that meeting, he had the mortification to find as some counterbalance that his worldly prospects had in his absence been in some degree blighted.

During a long period Meeres, a solicitor, had been his land agent, or steward,† and having mismanaged his trust, an action had been brought against him by Raleigh, which was pending when the expedition sailed for Cadiz. His counsel, Sergeant Heale—who afterwards deserted his interests and became the bitterest of his assailants at Winchester—on this occasion moved to have the trial staid till his re-

* Birch, ii. 96.

† The instrument by which Meeres was constituted Raleigh's agent is dated August 28th, 1592. State Paper Office.

turn: his application was denied, and judgment given in favour of Meeres. Immediately on learning this, Raleigh wrote a hasty and intemperate letter to his friend Henry Brooke, whom through courtesy he called "my lord." Brooke had not then, however, legally attained the title, for his father, who succeeded Hunsdon as Lord Chamberlain, did not die till the following March.* There is much that is enigmatical in Raleigh's letter. It speaks of castles, Spaniards, fortifications, and so on, but without designating any place, and then presses Brooke to meet the writer at Bath, where it says he expects Percy, Earl of Northumberland. In the postscript Raleigh thus attacks his Dorsetshire enemies :—

"My Lord Viscount hath so exalted Meere's suit against me in my absence, as neither Mr Sergeant Heale, nor any else, could be heard for me to stay trial while I was out of the land in her Majesty's service, a right and courtesy afforded to every beggar. I never busied myself with the Viscount, neither of his extortion, nor the poisoning of his wife, as it is here avowed. I have forborne him in respect of my Lord Thomas, and chiefly because of Mr Secretary, who, in his love, my Lord Thomas hath wished me to it; but I will not endure wrong at so peevish a fool's hands any longer, I will rather lose my life. I think that my Lord Puritan Periam doth think that the Queen shall have more use of rogues and villains than of me, or else he would not, at Byndon's instance, have yielded to try actions against me, being out of the land."†

Whether or not the visit to Bath took place does not appear; but in the course of the winter Raleigh repaired to London, where he lived in a style of great magnificence at Durham House, which stood facing the river, on the site of

* His death took place at midnight, March 5th, 1597. 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 25.

† Raleigh to Cobham, Weymouth, August 12th, 1596. State Paper Office.

the present Adelphi. Burleigh and Essex had likewise houses in the Strand, and between them a constant though superficial intercourse was carried on. Hostility to Spain was still the feeling uppermost in the public mind, and Essex, to gratify the country and soothe Elizabeth for the loss of the treasure which had been squandered among the officers at Cadiz, projected a new enterprise, denominated at the time the "Island Voyage." While this scheme was dragging its slow length along, a hundred Court intrigues were in simultaneous action, all aiming at place or pelf, and conducted in many cases with shameless effrontery. Viewed from without, office and power make a dazzling show, and create in vulgar minds the belief that all within is dignity and happiness; though, if the curtain were raised, the eye would turn away with scorn and disgust from the sycophancy, the crawling, the baseness, the slander, and falsehood by which eminence is too frequently attained.

Raleigh's chief object now, as it had been for years, was to appease Elizabeth, to accomplish which there were few things he would not have done. The principal bar to his success in this matter was the influence of Essex, which he had long vainly striven to neutralize. The task was one of Herculean difficulty. Every one knew that Secretary Cecil and Henry Brooke, now Lord Cobham, both in high favour with Elizabeth, reckoned among Raleigh's friends and Essex's enemies; how, therefore, could the vindictive and wayward favourite be brought to regard with complacency the individual whom such men favoured? There were, besides, perpetual conflicts going on for place and emolument; every man grasping at some office; while Essex aimed at commanding the whole fountain of preferment, that he might scatter honours and salaries without stint among his dependents. Before the elder Cobham died there was a legion of suitors for his places of Lord Chamberlain and Warden of the Cinque Ports, among

whom were his son Henry, Raleigh's nephew, Robert Sidney, Sir Edward Wotton, the Lords Hunsdon, Buckhurst, Willoughby, and even Essex himself. In favour of one or other of these, multitudes of friends and relations, male and female, besieged Elizabeth with solicitations, but she had for once made up her mind, and to the chagrin and disappointment of many, bestowed the much-coveted place on Cecil's brother-in-law, the young Lord Cobham.

The office of Vice Chamberlain being vacant, Raleigh joined in the scramble for appointments, and became a solicitor for that post. Too many obstacles, however, stood between him and success. In spite of his splendid services at Cadiz, Elizabeth still refused to see him, though it was suspected that the show of resentment would not be kept up much longer; yet no truer saying was ever uttered than that of Rowland White, who observes that "to be a nobleman born is more respected than to be virtuous and worthy."* This every one found who sought to rise at Elizabeth's Court, where merit was invariably postponed to rank, save in the case of Cecil, whom she herself had elevated. Seeing no other course left, Raleigh resolved upon what was generally believed to be a hopeless enterprise—reconciling Essex with the Secretary; for till this should be done, he saw clearly the hopelessness of all advancement for himself, since what one recommended to the Queen the other would certainly thwart. By what magic he wrought is not known, but in the early spring of 1597 the virulence of the feud between favourite and secretary began to abate, and the courtiers soon beheld with wonder the formation of a triumvirate, apparently welded in firm friendship: Raleigh, Essex, and Cecil dined, supped, and chatted continually together, and wise persons, astonished at the occurrence, began to inquire what new portent they should next witness.

It was soon noised abroad that another expedition was organizing against Spain, of which Essex was to be Ad-

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 26.

miral, Lord Thomas Howard Vice-admiral, and Raleigh Rear-admiral. With them, the Earl of Cumberland was sought to be joined in equal command; but from the conviction that birth ought always to take rank before intellect and virtue, he refused, even at the desire of the Queen, to take service in the enterprise. Whatever might be the prospect opening out before him, Essex could never for any length of time keep in check his evil passions. Regardless whether he gave umbrage to Elizabeth or not, he visited Lady Russell's daughter Anne, one of his old mistresses; then he feigned illness, and kept his chamber, though the wags of his establishment remarked that he ate and slept well. One day he meditated running away from the Court to seclude himself at his seat in Wales, and went so far as to have his servants mounted, and his own horse brought forth before the gates of Essex House, upon which, to pacify her presumptuous minion, the Queen made him Master of the Ordnance, with which addition to his income he was content.*

Raleigh's affairs meanwhile progressed but slowly, because, though Essex's jealousy might be lulled for a moment, he could not fail, when reflection awakened in him, to apprehend evil consequences from the restoration of his old enemy to favour. In doubt and uncertainty the spring wore away, and summer was fast approaching, during which, if any great enterprise were to be attempted, the fleet must put to sea. Cecil, with views of his own which it may not be impossible to divine, made use of his brief intimacy with the Earl to strengthen one party and weaken another at Court—for all probable eventualities he believed he could depend on Raleigh, and therefore so strenuously urged his claims, that Elizabeth, perhaps without much reluctance, consented to see him again. Essex, who could not be prevailed upon to witness the interview, rode away to Chatham. Full of the advantages to be derived from the

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 27.

step he was taking, Cecil, on the morning of the 1st of June, accompanied Raleigh to Court, and conducted him into the presence of the Queen.

If there was pleasure, there must also have been much pain in this meeting. Fifteen years before he had stood highest of all men in her favour, had been spoken of universally and publicly as her "minion," had influenced her will, directed the dispensing of her graces, and been, in brief, during ten years, nearly all-powerful. Her capricious affections, and his own preference of a youthful beauty, had severed the link between them, and therefore, when they met on this 1st of June, 1597, it was not as oracle and hierophant, not as Queen and favourite, but as sovereign and great statesman and commander. At his approach, and the sound of his voice, Elizabeth's resentment melted away —he was restored to office as the Captain of her Guard,* rode out with her on that same evening, and was thenceforward admitted as in former years to the most intimate intercourse.†

From the moment of Raleigh's restoration to his office Essex's star, in spite of some fitful and uncertain flashes of splendour, began to pale. He seemed to be under the influence of something like fate, which, however, was only the combination of his own incapacity, with the bigotry, envy, and vindictiveness of his adherents. Both to him and to Raleigh the expedition now in progress was big with momentous consequences. The fatal spirit of rivalry could not be quenched either in one or the other; Essex despised Raleigh as a man of inferior birth and position; while Raleigh flung back his contempt, knowing him to be his inferior in everything else.

With such feelings in their breasts, there could obviously be no cordial intimacy, though Raleigh laboured to stand well with the Earl, partly to pleasure Elizabeth,

* Chamberlain to Carleton, June 20th, 1597. State Paper Office.

† 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 55.

partly out of respect for the interest of the service in which he was engaged. The fortunes of England were in fact at stake; for as Philip, with the pertinacity of dotage, still clung to his policy of invasion, and had organized formidable armaments by sea and land for its realization, it was impossible to overrate the importance of destroying or taking possession of the means by which alone he could accomplish his purpose.* Raleigh accordingly determined to pursue the course which had enabled him to pass through the ordeal of the Cadiz expedition without scath. Yet his enemies were now stronger and more exasperated,† for among the higher officers he had few or no friends. Still his courage never flinched; he trusted much also to that unfailing courtesy which had often blunted the point of rancour and converted foes into friends. He saw that Elizabeth's passion for Essex, which in 1589 had rendered her regardless of shame and modesty, was now rapidly on the wane, and therefore hoped that forbearance towards her favourite would not need to be of long duration.

Before quitting London, Essex, desirous of leaving a favourable impression on Cecil's mind, gave him an entertainment, to which of course their mutual friends were invited: it was customary on such occasions to introduce, among other recreations, the performance of a play; and the piece chosen by Essex at his farewell banquet was 'Richard II.' It is not at all certain, however, that it was Shakespeare's, because there existed an older play on the same subject, which may have answered the Earl's purpose just as well; yet as Shakespeare's tragedy was produced this year, and entered on the stationers' books twelve days after the departure of the fleet, it may possibly have been the piece in question. The object, in that case, must have been discernible to all thinking spectators. It will be remembered, that nearly nine

* Birch, ii. 344.

† His reconciliation with Vere at Weymouth, he knew to be merely in appearance. Birch, ii. 352.

years before Essex had challenged Raleigh to single combat, when he had probably made use of threats and accusations which oozed out, and became part of public opinion on the subject of him and his rival. At first the council sought to assuage the fury of the young Earl, and preserve him from the avenging sword of Raleigh; but it is probable that before the furious antagonists consented to lay aside the design of engaging in mortal strife, Elizabeth herself was constrained to interfere. To these facts Shakespeare may have ventured to allude in his play, where Essex must be Bolingbroke, Raleigh Norfolk, and Elizabeth Richard II.

What was then done at Essex House, Elizabeth, though not present, beheld with vicarious eyes, and could not have failed to understand the menace. What happened four years later was in contemplation then, and it is not unfair to infer, that as the general purpose was shaping itself in the Earl's mind, so the subordinate incidents of the tragedy, bearing more or less directly upon Raleigh's fate, were also taking their place deliberately in his scheme. The shedding of an enemy's blood was held to be a light matter; Essex and his friends could by falsehood and perjury, which they regarded as venial offences, rid themselves of the Norfolk of their drama; after which they believed it would be easier to deal with Richard. Raleigh, we may be sure, understood the drift of the Earl's policy, though he affected to regard it from a sportive point of view: writing to Cecil from the fleet, in which he was for months to be cooped up with his enemy, he says, "I acquainted the Lord-general with your letter to me, and your kind acceptance of your entertainment; he was also wonderful merry at the conceit of Richard II. I hope it shall never alter, and whereof I shall be most glad as the true way to all our good, quiet, and advancement, and most of all for her sake whose affairs shall thereby find better progression." Then, turning away from this Utopian dream, and glancing at terrible probabilities which both he and Cecil contemplated, he adds,—"Sir, I will ever

be yours; it is all I can say, and I will perform it with my life and with my fortune." *

When losing sight for a moment of their own intrigues the admirals came to examine the great instrument with which they were expected to humble the enemy's pride, they made a discovery which they thus described to the council: —"We are at our wits' ends to find her Majesty's fleet weakly and wretchedly manned as it is. We did from Weymouth advertise your lordships, my Lord Admiral, and Mr Secretary, of the monstrous abuse in the press-masters that sent the men which brought us hither. We were furnished with men of all occupations, that neither knew any rope, many of them, nor were once at sea; and as many of our men tell us, all the good men, for twenty shillings apiece, let go. When we looked for a supply in the west, those of Dorsetshire appeared not a man; but either were underhand discharged by the press-masters, or made a jest of the press. Now at Plymouth Sir Charles Harris showeth a letter of your lordships and my Lord-admiral to discharge them all. How this doth perplex and confound us your lordship may judge."†

To deepen the effect of his banquet and drama in the mind of Cecil, the Earl forwarded with the joint letter a short note, in which he says, "Let this only renew the affection to yourself. '*Egos*' in your letter cannot warm his bill but in mine, and '*arregos*' would answer him in a full measure. Be constant, therefore, in loving your faithfully professed friend."

* From Plymouth, July 6th, 1597. State Paper Office.
† From Plymouth, July 8th, 1597. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XVII.

ISLAND VOYAGE.

On the evening of Sunday, July 10th,* the fleet set sail from Plymouth with a fair wind, which after two days changed to the south, and blew a hurricane. In a few hours the ships were separated, blown violently in various directions; and at length, after struggling vainly with the storm for several days, driven back, some into the ports of Cornwall, others to Plymouth. In letters to Cecil and the lords of the council, Raleigh gave a vivid description of this disaster, seasoning his language with an abundant allowance of hypocrisy and adulation. With Elizabeth, for whom these ingredients were introduced, this policy may have answered, unless Cecil, who understood its drift, thought proper to undeceive her. Essex first put into Falmouth, but coming round afterwards to Plymouth, he took up his quarters with Raleigh in the 'Warspite,'† while his flag-ship, the 'Merehonneur,' was sent to Chatham for repair. Writing to Cecil on the 26th of July, Raleigh says, "My Lord-general is my guest in the 'Warspite,' the Earl of Rutland, Sir Thomas Germyn, Alexander Ratcliffe, and Sir R. Mansfield. I should have taken it unkindly if my Lord had taken up any other lodging till the 'Lion' came; and now her Majesty may be sure his Lordship shall sleep somewhat the

* Sir William Brown to Sir Robert Sidney, July 24th, 1597. 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 517.

† Raleigh to Cecil, July 26th, 1597. State Paper Office.

sounder, though he fare the worse, by lying with me, for I am an excellent watchman by sea."

Knowing what sentiments lurked under these fine phrases, we cannot fail to regret the circumstances which forced Raleigh to use them. Cecil, to whom such Machiavellism was more natural, seems to have revelled in holding out glittering baits to his enemy; for in a letter identical in date with Raleigh's, he affects to reveal, as if inadvertently, the zeal for Essex's interest by which he is actuated. His sportive epistle formed the envelope to one from Elizabeth herself, written in that mystical jargon in which she so often delighted. "Eyes of youth have sharp sights, but commonly not so deep as those of elder age, which makes me marvel less at rash attempts and headstrong counsels, which give not leisure to judgment's warning, or heed advice; but make a laughter at the one, and despise with scorn the last. This have I not heard, but seen, and thereof can witness bear; yet I cannot be so leud of nature to suppose that the scope was not good, how so the race was run.

"Trust not to the grace of your crazed vessel, that to the ocean, may fortune be to humble. Foresee and prevent it now in time, afore too late. You vex me much with small regard of what I skeap or bid. Admit that by miracle it would do well, yet venture not such wonders, where such approachful mischief might betide you. There remains that you, after your perilous first attempt, do not aggravate that danger with another in a farther climate, which must cost of blows good store. Let characters serve your turn, and be contented when you are well, which hath not ever been your property. Of this no more, but for all my moods, I forget not my tenses, in which I see no leisure, for aught but petitions to fortify with best forwardness the wants of this army, and in the same includes your safe return, and grant you wisdom to distinguish between *veri-similie* and *potest fieri*. Forget not to salute with my great favour good Thomas and faithful Mountjoy. I am like the common fashion that

forget to give thanks for what I received; but I was so loth to take, that I had well nigh forgot to thank, but receive them now with millions, and let the nearest keep the dearest." *

As it had now become evident to the commanders of the fleet that some change in the object of the expedition would be necessary, Essex and Raleigh, on the 1st of August, set out from Plymouth to consult the oracles at Court.† Not enjoying the advantage of travelling by an express-train, they were somewhat long on their journey; since they had not arrived on the 6th, for on that day Cecil, who knew nothing of their movements, forwarded to the Earl the Queen's orders to draw up a proclamation, or, as it was then called, a challenge, to be translated into several languages, and dispersed over the Continent, stating the reasons which justified the expedition.

Through shortness of provisions and the lateness of the season, it was thought prudent to relinquish the design originally entertained of attacking Corunna and Ferrol, so that a large land-force would not be needed. Five thousand soldiers were accordingly dismissed,‡ the thousand veterans from the Low Countries being deemed sufficient for such enterprises as were contemplated on shore. With this modification of their plans, the admirals a second time sailed from Plymouth, and passing along the shores of France, and the green hills of Biscay, were before Corunna by sunset on the 24th.

The August of that year was prolific of tempests. A violent south-wester setting in with the night, Raleigh snapped his main-yard, and as he fell back along the shore, Sir William Brooke in the 'Dreadnought,' and upwards of twenty other vessels followed his lights.§ Essex in the

* July, 1596. MS. State Paper Office.

† Birch, ii. 353. 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 59.

‡ Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii. 597.

§ Relation by Essex and other Commissioners, in Purchas, ii. 1935. Birch, ii. 360.

'Repulse' met with no less a disaster, for his ship sprang a leak, and for some hours could with difficulty be kept afloat. However, the damage being repaired, he held on his course, touching first at one point of rendezvous, then at another, in quest of the missing ships; but not meeting them, put out to sea, and bore towards Flores, which he reached on the 11th of September.

It has been already shown that the fleet was filled with Raleigh's enemies, who now finding that he had not arrived, congratulated themselves on the good chance of reopening the breach between him and Essex, and wounding his reputation at home. It would be puerile to pretend that the Lord-general needed much provocation to strike a blow at his rival; falling in readily with the suggestions of Meyrick, Shirley, and above all, of his bloody father-in-law, Blount, he hastily drew up a despatch, filled with accusations against Raleigh, and detaching a fly-boat from the fleet, sent it under the command of Robert Knollys to England.

Meanwhile Raleigh, having repaired his main-yard, was following at no great distance in the wake of Essex. Touching at the North Cape and the Rock of Lisbon, he there found numerous ships waiting for the General, all of which he ordered to follow him. On the 8th of September he found himself among the islands of the Wild Hawk group, and pushing his course slowly amid sultry calms, lunar-rainbows, and moonlight prospects of strange beauty, made Flores on the 14th.* Finding that the main body of the fleet had forestalled him, he immediately repaired on board the 'Repulse,' where Essex, with no little shame, confessed to him the affair of the calumnious despatch, and with many expressions of regret, promised to forward another in which he would contradict his former statements. This being settled, a council of war was held in Essex's cabin, at which it was determined, that while awaiting the arrival of the treasure-ships, they should take possession of the main

* Gorges, in Purchas, ii. 1949.

islands of the group; the capture of Fayal, containing the best port in the islands, was assigned to Essex and Raleigh; that of Graciosa to Howard and Vere; San Miguel fell to the share of Mountjoy and Blount; while Pico, the island in which best wine was found, was given to the Flemings as the place most congenial to their tastes.

Matters being thus arranged, Essex, who had supplied himself with water and provisions, set sail, leaving Raleigh and his squadron to furnish themselves with the supplies they needed. Having issued orders for the taking in of water with all convenient speed, Raleigh, with Sir William Brooke, Sir Arthur Gorges, and other officers, went on shore to enjoy the pleasure of a stroll in the country, and meeting Lord Grey, and Sir Gilly Meyrick, they walked out to a small town a mile or two inland, where they dined.* When, after their return, they were all snug in their berths, Captain Arthur Champernoun came to them about midnight, with orders from the General to suspend the process of watering, and repair to him immediately at Fayal, where they would find all they needed. Firing off several shots to give notice to Brooke and the other commanders, Raleigh obeyed at once, and sailed for Fayal. When he beheld the island rising out of the ocean, in clustering eminences, tufted with trees, or pinnacled with aspiring rocks, he little dreamed what mischances awaited him amid those secluded scenes. All was calm and peaceful as he warped into the harbour;† Essex had not arrived, neither, it was evident, did the inhabitants expect a visit from any enemy; but upon beholding the 'Warspite,' the 'Dreadnought,' and their consorts, they understood their danger, and began to make preparations, some for flight, others for defence. Men,

* Purchas, ii. 1951.

† A writer of the last century, describing the Azores, observes that the harbour of Fayal, the best in the group, will contain ninety sail in perfect safety. The island then exported about 10,000 pipes of wine annually, and lying in the way of homeward-bound ships, was much frequented. 'History of the Azores,' p. 288.

women, children, nuns, friars, hurried pell-mell out of the town, bearing with them whatever effects they could in carriages, in carts, and on horses. While the stream of fugitives made towards the mountains, the soldiers in considerable bodies took up their positions at the various landing-places, where they threw up earthworks, and planted artillery.

Had Essex according to agreement been there, the proper course would doubtless have been to commence the attack at once, while the defences were unfinished, and ere all articles of value should have been removed. But precautions had been too surely taken by the illfated commander to prevent all chance of success. This was indeed to be from beginning to end an enterprise upon which mismanagement, failure, and disgrace were to stamp their marks. Knowing the Lord-general's jealous and vindictive humour, of which he had had some foretaste at Flores, Raleigh forbore the prize which lay so temptingly before him, listening to the murmurs of his crews, and the ill-repressed reproaches of his officers, who with good reason marvelled at the slackness of so impetuous a commander. They pointed to the town, rising terrace after terrace from the very wash of the sea, to the summit of a lovely eminence, where a strong fort with curtains, ramparts, and battlements, waved over by the flag of Spain, looked defiance at the strangers. They stood in need of provisions; they thirsted for sweet water, which they beheld falling in sparkling rivulets into the sea. Why should they not cool their lips with it? The contents of their casks on board had long been converted into a puddle, fetid and noisome, their provisions were loathsome—before them lay everything they needed in abundance—why would not he, who in England had long been known as the fiery Raleigh, place himself at their head and lead them, as he had been wont, to victory.

In consequence of these discontents, a council, after two days' delay, met on board the 'Warspite.' Raleigh, Brooke,

Gorges, and Harvey argued in favour of an immediate assault, but Meyrick, Shirley, and Parker, adherents of Essex, at once servile and petulant, made strenuous oppositions. A further delay of two days was therefore agreed upon, at the expiration of which, whether the General arrived or not, Fayal was to be captured.

Four days having been wasted in vain expectations, Raleigh threw himself into his barge, and beneath a heavy fire pulled towards the landing-place. His patience was exhausted, his blood was up, he rejected the aid of the Flemish captains, who frankly offered it, and at the head of his English followers made good his landing, charged the batteries,* drove the Spaniards in utter rout before him, and making his way up the hill, followed by four hundred and fifty Englishmen, dashed into Fayal, and was master of it, almost with the rapidity of magic.

Most cities when entered belie the promise of their exterior; with Fayal it was otherwise, for our countrymen found it to be a pleasant place,—"full of fine gardens, orchards, and wells of delicate waters, with fair streets, and one very fair church; also a nunnery and a friary." † Raleigh immediately took orders for quartering his troops, and having thrown up barricades, and set guards at the principal entrances to the town to prevent surprise, the rest of the soldiers were permitted to disperse in search of plunder. Having refreshed themselves with the wine and provisions which fell into their hands, they, as the night came on, betook themselves to rest, leaving the high fort to be dealt with on the morrow. As the day however began to break over the ocean, Essex's whole fleet was beheld making before the wind towards Fayal, a moving city of canvas upon the waves. As soon as the 'Repulse' cast anchor, the bitterest of Raleigh's enemies, Sir Gilly Meyrick, was on board, relating to Essex the proceedings of the last four days, in the most distorted and irritating language. All mean natures

* 'History of the World,' vi. 104. † Purchas, ii. 1957.

are crawling to the powerful. Highest in the Queen's favour, closely allied to her by blood, Essex, besides his office of Commander-in-chief, possessed every requisite for rallying the servile and malignant around him, to exasperate his worst passions, and unite with him in depressing or destroying those whom he thought proper to look upon as his enemies. When Raleigh, who had pulled from the beach in his barge, climbed the ladder, and stood upon the deck of the 'Repulse,' he walked towards the General's cabin, between rows of scowling and menacing faces, and Essex, after giving him a faint welcome, burst forth into reproaches and accusations.* The course to be pursued towards him had been already determined on; referring to the instructions to the fleet, Essex pointed out that article which made it death for an officer to land troops or attack any place without the General's presence or command. All they who were eager to take Raleigh's life crowded round, and began to congratulate themselves that the long-wished-for moment had at length arrived. With imperturbable coolness Raleigh replied to Essex, who had charged him with breach of order, that he knew not of any such breach, and as to the article on which his Lordship laid so much stress, he desired the General to give him leave to defend himself by those laws which he as well as others had devised, and his Lordship, with the council of war, had authorized, and that then his Lordship should find that he had not committed any error at all. "For," said he, "there is an article that, no captain of any ship, nor captain of any company, if he be severed from the fleet, shall land anywhere without directions from the General, or some other principal commander, upon pain of death; but I take myself to be a principal commander under your Lordship, and therefore not subject to that article, nor under the power of the law-martial, because a successive commander of the whole fleet in Her Majesty's

* See Birch, ii. 360.

Letters Patent, your Lordship and my Lord Thomas Howard failing." *

After a full half-hour spent in these bickerings, Essex put on for the moment a show of satisfaction, and going ashore with Raleigh, remained a short time at his quarters; matters, however, were not to be suffered to end so. Several influential officers in the fleet, hating the Rear-admiral, were fully bent on enacting a tragedy at Fayal, which could not be brought to its dénouement without keeping open the breach between the Admirals. When Raleigh therefore invited Essex to sup with him, saying he would claim no privilege on that account, but would answer for his conduct in the morning, Sir Christopher Blount, dreading everything that seemed to promise a pacification, replied that Essex would not sup at all that night; to which Raleigh answered, that "When he invited him, he might disable his own appetite, but if my Lord pleased to stay, he would be very glad of his presence."

With these words the meeting broke up.† Essex and his partisans to mature their scheme for the Rear-admiral's destruction, and he to resolve in his own mind the means of counteracting their machinations. The plan pressed upon the General was to bring Raleigh to trial by a Court-martial, and if they found him guilty, as they resolved they would, to put him forthwith to death; by which the Earl would be at once delivered from the chief impediment to his absolute sway at Court, and from his most formidable rival on the ocean. The course of argument they followed has been consigned to oblivion; Blount, Shirley, Meyrick, Parker, were notoriously inimical to the Rear-admiral; Mountjoy, Rutland, and Southampton may be supposed to have waded

* Gorges in Purchas, ii. 1958.

† Sir William Monson, in his 'Naval Tracts in Churchill,' iii. 173, gives a brief but honest account of this transaction, observing that if Essex had not feared how the matter might be taken, it would have gone hard with Raleigh.

through the same slough of guilt, but unless through his own testimony * we should scarcely have believed that the great soldier Sir Francis Vere could have descended to act so ignoble a part. He tells us, however, that he displayed on this occasion less spleen than the others against Raleigh, which is admitting that he countenanced, though with less vehemence, their sanguinary purpose. By those who sought to enhance his generosity, Essex is reported to have said, that if Raleigh had been his friend, he would have proceeded against him, as his adherents advised; but this only places his character in a worse light, for conceding to him the possession of common sense, we must assume him to have known Raleigh to have been in the right, and that he had therefore no ground for proceeding against him, whether friend or foe.

Meanwhile, perceiving the deadly drift of his enemies, and convinced that they would shrink from no act of injustice or treachery to compass his death, Raleigh formed a determination which in any other circumstances would have been pronounced desperate. This was to sever his squadron from the rest of the fleet, to throw himself on the fidelity and attachment of his mariners, to clear his decks for action, and dare Essex to employ the *ultima ratio* of violence. He had come to this resolution, when Lord Thomas Howard, conjecturing by the movements of his squadron what was in contemplation, came on board the "Warspite." As Vice-admiral he possessed great authority, and as a man of moderate counsels, still more. He could not regard without keen anxiety the consequenses of an appeal to force, and therefore made use of every means in his power to prevent it. Knowing Raleigh to be in the right, and believing that Essex, who must share the same conviction, would be glad to be delivered from the dilemma in which his own weakness and the wickedness of his partisans had placed him, he sought to prevail on Raleigh to trust himself once more on board the

* Vere, 'Commentaries,' p. 51.

'Repulse.' Believing that he would thus be placing himself in the hands of his inveterate foes, Raleigh felt reluctant to follow the advice of Howard, till he pledged his own honour and life for his safety, and volunteered, moreover, should anything notwithstanding be attempted against him, to draw off from Essex with his ships, and if things came to the worst, to join Raleigh's squadron in battle.

With this understanding between himself and the Vice-admiral Raleigh in his barge was once more rowed to the 'Repulse,' where, for the interest of England, and to avoid the dishonour of her flag, he consented to apologize for having performed his duty; upon which the wayward and presumptuous favourite reluctantly laid aside the weapons of falsehood and malice. We shall discover, however, as we proceed that this scene of humiliation on the part of Raleigh, and of puerile triumph on that of Essex, was not buried in the vaults of forgetfulness, but kept perpetually before the memory, the more galling, because it had to be concealed beneath the veil of amity. While Raleigh's fate was in the balance, that of all the land and sea captains who had acted with him was so likewise; but upon the apparent reconciliation of the angry commanders, all those gentlemen were set at liberty.

Affairs having been thus settled, Essex, who had postponed all care of public business to the gratification of his private resentment, began to remember that he had certain duties to perform, among which one was to storm the fort which commanded the town, and to make prisoners of its garrison. A force was accordingly sent on this service, which summoning the Spaniards to surrender, and obtaining no answer, imagined some stratagem to be intended, and hesitated to proceed. By degrees the fact became evident, that the enemy with bag and baggage had evacuated the place in the night, leaving behind them nothing but the bodies of two captive officers, one an Englishman, the other a Fleming, whose throats they had cut to grace their departure.

The remainder of this expedition was nothing but one series of errors and mischances, exhibitions of disobedience on the part of inferiors, and of strange wilfulness on that of the General. Sailing back to St Michael's, instead of taking the chief town, Essex left Raleigh with the fleet lying before it, and proceeded with the troops to Villa Franca, a few miles off, where he continued feasting and rioting six whole days. Sir Arthur Gorges suggests that they ultimately spared the place in consideration of large bribes, which is not at all improbable, especially as great care was taken to leave Raleigh at a distance, that he might not be a witness of their proceedings. Gorges, indeed, affects to exculpate the General from suspicion, observing that he cared not for wealth; but even if this view of him were correct, there were other passions besides avarice for the gratification of which Essex may have consented to spare Villa Franca.*

While lying off St Michael's, Raleigh captured a valuable prize, and but for the interference of a Low Country captain, would have taken another far more valuable. This was a ship of sixteen hundred tons burden, laden chiefly with spices, which, supposing the fleet to be Spanish, sailed into the midst of it before her officers had discovered their mistake. She then however ran herself aground, and disembarking the men with all the merchandise that time would allow, set herself on fire, and when Raleigh came up in his barge, was one blaze of thunder and lightning, the ordnance discharging, and the flames mounting into the air, while the burning spices diffused their perfume for miles round.

The autumnal equinox now coming on, the sea became exceedingly rough, upon which it was resolved to abandon all further attempts against the Spaniards and return homewards. On the way they were overtaken by a violent storm, during which a number of birds—an owl, a tarsel, a falcon, and afterwards a dove—alighted on the shrouds of

* Purchas, ii. 1964.

the 'Warspite,' and were supposed by the sailors to foretell the pleasant calm that followed. During this part of the voyage, Essex seems to have been as much misled by his seafaring guides as he had previously been by his political friends, for he was only prevented by Sir Arthur Gorges from being wrecked and lost on the sands of the Welsh coast. To give him warning of his danger, this gallant officer ordered a gun to be fired,* which the master gunner obeyed sorely against his will; for both he and old Broadbent, the sailing-master of the 'Warspite,' would have allowed them to perish in revenge for the losses they had suffered by them, and as a punishment of their presumptuous ignorance.

Contrary to expectation, the Spanish Armada, when Essex's fleet was far out in the Atlantic, had put forth from the harbours of Spain and Portugal, and made for England, where there was neither fleet nor army to resist it. The moment was one of imminent peril. Some of its officers went on shore in the Scilly Islands, its sails were beheld from the headlands of Cornwall, where fly-boats and caravels, the harbingers of its approach, put in at various points, and threw the whole country into confusion. But the elements again interposed—a hurricane from the north-west catching the advancing enemy in the open sea, scattered their ships and hurled them back, rent and shattered, to their own coast, whence they never afterwards ventured to prosecute their enterprises against Elizabeth.

* Purchas, ii. 1968.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RALEIGH, A PEACEMAKER.

While Essex, Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Francis Vere, Lord Mountjoy, and the other gallants of the fleet hastened to Court, where they expected to reap in various ways a harvest of fame and pleasure, Raleigh remained at the head of the land and sea forces in the West, where he was Lord-lieutenant. What prompted the Earl's haste was the desire to forestall with his own story any relations which Raleigh might be disposed to give the Queen of the expedition to the Azores. But his speed, however great, had been outstript by fame; Elizabeth was already in possession of the whole truth; and therefore, when he appeared, gave him so cool a reception that, in extreme disgust, he retired from Court, and shut himself up in his house at Wanstead.

No one could be more fully aware than himself that the expedition had been a failure; that his own conduct throughout its continuance had been impolitic and disgraceful, and that instead, therefore, of meriting any reward, he ought to be removed from his high position, which should in fairness be given to Raleigh. Knowing, however, the Queen's weakness for him, he felt no fear that any such justice would be done to his rival. The arrow that now stuck and rankled in his vanity had been sped from another quarter; during his absence Elizabeth, regaining her freedom of action, had made Cecil Master of the Wards, and promoted Lord Charles Howard to the earldom of Nottingham, which gave him

precedence of Essex at Court. For this proceeding he held Lord Burleigh and his son* to be quite as responsible as the Queen; and it was expected by the hangers-on about the Court who worshipped grandeur and great people from a distance, that a new rupture must follow between the moody Earl and those whom his friend Henry Howard called "the Leviathan and his cub." The day for that rupture however had not yet arrived. Essex now directed all the fury of his anger against Nottingham, whose patent he insisted should be cancelled; otherwise he would extend no forgiveness to the fond old Queen, and would challenge the new-made Earl or any of his sons or kindred to meet him in the field.

By the pranks of this presumptuous favourite, Elizabeth, whose mind was too evidently losing its masculine firmness, allowed herself to be thrown into a state truly deserving of commiseration. The question of cancelling Nottingham's patent was debated; other contrivances for pacifying Essex were taken into consideration; but kind offers and messages were spurned, and the malcontent had at least the satisfaction of perceiving that he could, whenever he thought proper, arrest the whole current of public business. In the hope of disguising her overweening partiality, Elizabeth ordered first one minister, then another, to address Essex, to expostulate with him, as if of themselves, to urge the necessity of his taking his place in parliament, and returning to Court. Lord Hunsdon first took up this burden, and informed him that "Her Majesty much wondered and made many constructions of your absence, holding it with imputations of further desert in your late service by the enemy than you have any ways deserved. I pleaded your want of health—the shooting in your temples upon cold or any long speech—and yet your readiness to attend her Majesty,

* Rowland White, speaking of this affair, says, "the Queen lays the blame of the wrong done to Essex upon Burleigh and Cecil, though they do, with infinite protestations, execrations, and vows, deny it." 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 77.

if she should be pleased to command your service. She accounted your duty and place sufficient to command you, and that a prince was not to be contested withal by a subject. Then, hearing that you intended to go to Grafton, I told her Majesty that after you should find some amendment in the state of your body, I suppose you would for a short time retire yourself to a private regard of your own estate, which it behoved you, as shaken, to settle; but she rather imagined you should look into the public state of the nation as a councillor, than to respect your private state when you might take a more quiet time hereafter to look into it. Many discourses passed, in which I found nothing but kindness and consort towards you, if you will but turn about and take it."*

From the time of this communication, Essex—surrounded by his evil counsellors—the Blounts, the Cuffes, the Meyricks, the Danvers, the Lees, who foresaw not towards what they were precipitating both their victim and themselves—understood his present advantage, and felt that he had only to persevere a little longer in order to extort from the humiliated Queen whatever he might think proper to demand. Hunsdon's missive not producing the desired effect, Burleigh, now verging upon fourscore years and ten, was commissioned to woo back the sullen favourite whom in his heart he scorned.

"I know not how," he says, "to write to your Lordship for my satisfaction and your contentation. Sorry I am for your abstinence from here, whereby her Majesty hath want of her services, and yourself subject to diversity of censure. I find her Majesty incline to such as advise to that which was meet for her to do and for you to receive.

"Good my Lord, even come here with yielding, without disparagement of your honour, and plead your own cause with your presence, whereto I will be as serviceable as any friend you have, to my power, which is not to *run* for good

* November, but without day of month, 1597. State Paper Office.

feet, nor to fight for lack of sound hands, but able and ready with my heart to command my tongue to do you due honour.

"W. BURLEIGH.*

"I wish to receive news when you come to the Court."

It was probably at this stage of the proceedings that Raleigh's inveterate enemy, Sir Francis Vere, came in the character of peacemaker to Court. Elizabeth felt much respect for this brave old soldier, whose welcome on this occasion was not the less warm because he appeared as Essex's friend. The interview with the stately old lady took place in the gardens of Whitehall, where, like an irritated lioness, she was pacing to and fro, probably turning over in her mind various methods for bringing her favourite again to her feet. Approaching the Queen obsequiously, Vere entered into a defence of Essex's conduct at the Azores, laying the blame of failure, he says, on those who deserved it, among whom he looked upon Raleigh as the chief. By this unlucky assertion he overthrew the whole scheme of his intervention, for Elizabeth's reliance on the wisdom of her former oracle had revived, so that she thought meanly of all who fell short of that estimate of his abilities which she had determined in her own mind to be the right one.

While Essex and his sanguinary buffoons were feasting and fiddling at Wanstead, and laughing at the perturbation into which they had thrown the Queen and her ministers, Raleigh himself appeared once more upon the stage. What Hunsdon and Burleigh had attempted in vain Elizabeth believed he could accomplish, and he was accordingly commissioned to restore harmony to the Court. Ordinary logic, however keen and subtle, would have been lost upon Essex, on the altar of whose vanity no incense was pleasing save

* The minister was now in his eighty-eighth year, having been born September 13th, 1510. MS. State Paper Office, 1597.

that which ascended from the humiliation of others. The laurels of Nottingham would suffer him to taste no repose—he must therefore be pushed from his rank, or the favourite be placed before him, otherwise the Queen should be for ever denied the happiness of patting him on the cheek, and basking in his smiles. Raleigh saw at once how this great achievement was to be accomplished. The office of Lord-marshal had been in abeyance since the death of George Earl of Shrewsbury in 1590;—revive it and bestow it on Essex, which would restore to him what he coveted—the immense gratification of strutting in court-pageants before the conqueror of the Armada.

Raleigh now experienced the truth of the old Latin proverb, *Incidit in Scyllam qui vult evitare Charybdim;* for what was sweet to Essex proved gall and wormwood to Nottingham.* Though victorious over Medina Sidonia in the narrow seas, he felt that he had now been defeated on a much more perilous battle-field—for the Court of Elizabeth was nothing else, though, instead of calivers and great guns, the arms employed were intrigue, slander, calumny, and falsehood. What was to be done? He must consider, and to command leisure for consideration he must be ill. He was immediately seized, therefore, by fever, or the cholic, and retired, melancholy and crestfallen, to his house at Chelsea. This was the usual stratagem to which malcontent courtiers had recourse, and Elizabeth, who perfectly understood their maladies, employed various medicines for their cure, sometimes sending them possets, sometimes promises of preferment. Nottingham was old, but not at all the wiser on that account. No stripling fresh from the lawns of Penshurst, or the morasses of Lincolnshire, could have outdone the giddy frivolity with which this great seaman threw away his white wand

* Sir Henry Neville, writing privately to Cecil, relates a conversation he had held with Henri IV., who had learned from his ambassador the particulars of the discords between the Lord-admiral and Essex. Winwood, i. 27.

of office as Lord-steward of the Household to chafe and fret in the suburbs at Raleigh's interference. It seems more than probable that he never at heart forgave this device of the Lord-marshalship; for though long afterwards when, upon the overthrow of Essex, Raleigh stood once more in the full blaze of Elizabeth's favour, the crafty Lord-admiral was seen to stoop, and, with the skirts of his gorgeous cloak wipe the dust from Raleigh's shoes, he only waited for the opportunity which soon presented itself to discharge the pent-up venom of his heart.

In wretched squabbles such as the above terminated the thirty-ninth year of Elizabeth's reign. In the course of their lives, all men have much to forget and forgive; and in proportion to the nobility of their souls is the completeness of their forgiveness. Raleigh was the least vindictive man of his age; he could be fiercely angry, and when duty appeared to require it, could likewise be unrelenting and remorseless; but in mere matters of feeling or personal irritation, he may be said to have been always ready to throw the veil of oblivion over the wrongs he had suffered. Still, in regard to Essex, what now appeared to be friendship was mere sham. Both he and Cecil were fully cognizant of the Earl's dealings with Scotland, and knew what they boded to them; they were likewise perfectly aware that Wanstead was chokeful of perjured villains and assassins, the use to be made of whom it was not as yet possible to discern, though the employment which such men coveted could not be innocent. Still it was deemed advisable by all the parties concerned to preserve a short lull in their animosities that they might be the better prepared to profit by the recurrence of favourable contingencies.

To persons outside this pause in the breathless chase of ambition appeared to be friendship, and keen was the envy with which what was thought to be the good fortune of Raleigh and Cecil inspired their competitors. "It is exceedingly wondered at by the world," says White, "to see

the too great familiarity that is grown between the Earl of Essex, Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Cobham: none but they enjoy him; they carry him away as they list."*

What the ultimate designs of the confederates aimed at will appear hereafter. Cecil was meditating a short absence, having been appointed, in conjunction with Herbert and Wilkes, to proceed on an embassy to France for the purpose of dissuading Henri Quatre from concluding a peace with Spain. Raleigh, who saw honours, titles, and places showered profusely on his competitors, likewise endeavoured to make a move in advance: the Vice-chamberlainship was vacant, and seeing no chance of anything better, he sought to secure that post to himself. Finding, however, that the husband of his niece Barbara was also making interest for the same appointment, he desisted from the attempt.†

His ambition next took a higher flight; and observing Cecil to be filled on the eve of his departure with a prudent fervour of generosity, that he might multiply defenders during his absence, he caused it to be understood that a seat in the Upper House would not be displeasing to him.

In the interval between Cecil's appointment and his departure, a thousand pressing affairs crowded upon him. Essex, up to the ears in debt, was clamorous to have some means devised for paying them: Raleigh, it is said, offered him a third part of the proceeds of his prizes if he would use his favour with the Queen to obtain for him the honours he had deserved by his long services; but as the Earl either would not or could not fall in with the scheme, Cecil had to worry Elizabeth out of a sum nearly equal to forty thousand pounds of our money, to deliver his prodigal rival from his creditors. He well knew, however, that no amount of money would long keep Essex out of difficulties. The tan of his complexion ‡ by the sun of Spain, which in 1596 had ruined

* 'Sidney State Papers,' ii. 79.

† Rowland White, January 14th, 1598. ‡ Birch, i. 141.

him in the estimation of the aristocratic courtezans who thronged the palace, had now probably disappeared before the influence of an English winter, for his mistresses multiplied rapidly: he persevered in his visits to the house of Lady Russell; he flirted with Lady Mary Howard and Mrs Southwell; he renewed his intimacy with the fair Brydges,* and through these circumstances, the secretary always possessed the means of bringing about a new rupture between the favourite and the Queen.

Meantime the hours passed merrily by; from New Year's Day to the beginning of February, all externally was frolic and joyousness with men several of whom used pleasure only as the bait of ambition. Dinners, music, the drama, the glow of poetry, and the fascinations of women were enlisted in the service of political intrigue, but wholly failed to throw the crafty secretary for one moment off his guard.

An able statesman of the ancient world observes that women are then in their happiest and most natural condition when little is said of them by men, either for good or ill. Through prudence or the benignity of fortune, Lady Raleigh appears to have squared her conduct upon this theory; yet we catch some glimpses of her magnificent figure amid the feasting, the music, the dramas, which at Durham House, at Lord Compton's, at Lord Southampton's, at Lord Cobham's, preceded Cecil's departure for the Continent. Her female companions were such as chance, not choice, must have thrown around her—the Countess of Derby, Lady Walsingham, Mrs Anne Russell, and others.

Mindful of how his father and he had stolen a march upon Essex in 1596 and the following year, Cecil now feared lest the tables should be turned upon him. His reluctance to set out, therefore, became so powerful that it penetrated through all disguises, and to quiet his apprehensions, Essex, out of gratitude for the large sums of money Cecil had procured for him, entered into a positive engagement to pro-

* Bohun, p. 340.

mote no persons during his absence with whom he might afterwards find it disagreeable to act.

Cecil set out on his diplomatic mission, the object of which was completely defeated by the conclusion of a treaty between France and Spain, known in history as the Peace of Vervins. Towards the close of winter no inconsiderable alarm was occasioned by the intelligence that a Spanish fleet had been discovered at sea, making towards the English Channel. The whole extent of coast, from the Thames to the Land's End, was ordered to be put in readiness to resist invasion, Essex being appointed to command in Kent, Raleigh in Cornwall, with instructions to muster the strength of the counties; but the news arriving shortly after that the enemy's fleet had put into Calais, the panic subsided.

Events were now in progress, which, without Raleigh's agency, hastened the ruin of his most inveterate enemies, though by way of counterbalance they imparted fresh strength to others. Two great questions pressed upon the attention of the Government: peace with Spain, and the choice of a new Lord-deputy for Ireland. During the discussions in Council on the former, the opposition of Burleigh and Essex led to angry words, for the old statesman, accusing the favourite of delighting in nothing but slaughter, handed him the Prayer Book, pointing with his finger to these words: "Men of blood shall not live out half their days." *

From this subject a transition was made to that of selecting a Lord-deputy for Ireland. Public opinion included Raleigh among those who were deemed to be qualified to assume the office; but Essex, who knew his repugnance to be insurmountable, favoured the appointment of Sir George Carew, not through friendship, but in order to remove him out of the way. Elizabeth preferred the claims of Essex's own uncle, Sir William Knollys, and treated his arguments with disdain. The incentives to men's actions are often

* Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii. 608.

obscure even to themselves; at the Queen's elbow were two of the Earl's most inveterate enemies, the Earl of Nottingham and Sir Robert Cecil, before whom, in a paroxysm of presumption, he turned contemptuously upon his heel and stood with his back towards the Queen. Scarcely any act could have exceeded such an insult in grossness. Elizabeth sprang from her seat, and indignation stifling all sense of decorum, gave the pampered minion a sound box on the ear. In the blindness of rage, Essex put his hand on his sword, which he would have drawn on the Queen had not the Lord-admiral stepped between them. The remark in which he then indulged was as unbecoming as his conduct; swearing a great oath, he said he neither could nor would put up with such an affront, which he would not have borne from Henry VIII. himself. The Queen no less disdainfully bade him "Go and be hanged;" * upon which he left the presence, retired indignantly from Court, and shut himself up as usual at Wanstead.

From this moment Essex's fate was sealed. To deepen the wound which his insolence and ingratitude had made in Elizabeth's breast, he is reported to have said in his anger that "Her disposition was as crooked as her carcase." † Women forgive injuries, but neither forgive nor forget insults. Elizabeth's conduct throughout had been such as to reveal but too clearly the nature of the relations which up to that time had subsisted between them; but with some involuntary gushes of fondness and secret touches of remorse, she thenceforward began to invoke the intervention of Nemesis. If not before, she now resolved to take order that none but approved artists ‡—that is, that none but such as understood their responsibility—should take her portrait, and that any

* Camden, *ubi supra.*

† Clarendon, 'Parallel between Essex and Buckingham, Reliquiæ Wottonianæ,' p. 192.

‡ Raleigh, 'History of the World,' Preface, ii. 19.

which might have been made by others should be destroyed. Mirrors—which know no flattery—were carefully kept out of her way;* and the young beauties surrounding her, who could not if they would conceal their bloom and loveliness, called forth more than ever the asperity of her censure, and awakened in her more poignant jealousy.

About this time a miscreant, recently arrived from Scotland, having been arrested, imprisoned, tried and condemned for various heinous offences, suddenly made a confession which excited general consternation: he said he had been tampered with by James of Scotland, who with many lures and promises, urged him to perpetrate a fearful crime. Over this transaction obscurity and doubt were suffered to gather, some pretending that the accusation was merely a stratagem invented by the wretch to save or prolong his own existence, while others gave full credit to his statement, especially those who were cognisant of Essex's secret correspondence with the Scottish king, as well as with the character and unscrupulous policy of that personage. How much or how little Elizabeth herself believed must remain matter of conjecture, though there appears to be good grounds for thinking that she was not altogether incredulous. The crime meditated, however, was her murder; and the chief reason she assigned for her affected scepticism was unwillingness to be convinced that any sovereign prince could be guilty of such wickedness. After the experience of forty years, during which her life had been frequently attempted at the instigation of sovereign princes, both male and female, this declaration assumed very much the appearance of satire.† James interpreted it

* Bohun, 'Character of Elizabeth,' pp. 302, 303.

† See Act to seclude from the throne all who had conspired against Elizabeth's life, Winwood, i. 3. In the same volume there is an account of one Ogleby, a Scotchman, who went from Rome to Madrid professing to be instructed with a secret mission by James, who desired to confederate with Spain for the purpose of avenging his mother's death, and was ready to become a Catholic to insure the aid he sought, p. 2. Ogleby's business was believed at the time to deserve serious attention, *ibid.* p. 52; Cf. 'Secret Correspondence of James with Cecil,' p. 5.

in that sense, and by a letter thoroughly in harmony with the character of the writer, laboured to remove the suspicions which he could not but perceive she entertained. In this strange production, he addresses the Queen of England as "Madam and dearest sister," but the language he employs is unsatisfactory :—

"That I have been so long answering your last letter I most heartily pray you not to impute it to any fault of courtesy in me, whereunto I thank God my nature is in no ways inclined ; but in truth I bear so little regard to so vile and treacherous lies, proceeding from so base a fountain, as I, through my own innocence should have force enough to bear me through the foggy mist of such groundless calumnies, and therefore had remitted the answer to your letter to have been carried by a messenger of my own, whom I am shortly to send unto you. My only suit is, that while you hear further from me, which shall be with all diligence, you would favour me so far as to delay the fellow's execution, if he be yet alive, to the effect that by some honourable means, wherein I am to deal with you, my undeserved slander may be removed from the minds of all men, which assuring myself of your princely honour and love towards me, you will gladly do. I commit you, Madam, and dearest sister, to the tuition of the Almighty. From my palace of Falkland, the 30th July, 1598.

"Your most loving and affectionate
"Brother and Cousin,
"James R."

While Essex was involving himself in the meshes of that net which drew him ultimately to the block, Raleigh was leading a life irksome from its peacefulness; sometimes he received a number of distinguished guests at his castle in Dorsetshire, sometimes at Durham House, while his duties or interests occasionally made him an inmate of the Palace. Though naturally haughty beyond most men, he threw off

among seamen and soldiers the stately guise of a courtier, and like Bluff Hal, affected the familiarity in which they delight. Returning to the Palace late one night, and knocking impatiently at the guard-room door, he was answered by a soldier from within. "Who is there?" inquired Raleigh. "One of Her Majesty's knaves," replied the soldier. "Open the door then, knave," said the captain. Hurt at being taken at his word, the soldier, when Raleigh entered, observed, "Nay, no knave, but one of her Majesty's honest servants."—"Right, friend," quoth Raleigh, "it was he was the knave who first said so."

Elizabeth habitually went to bed and rose early; but her courtiers, especially the sleepless Raleigh, kept bad hours, drinking, smoking, or gambling, according to the bent of their inclinations.

One night in the Presence-chamber, Raleigh, Southampton, and Parker playing at Primero, laughed and talked loud, upon which Ambrose Willoughby, Squire for the Body, requested them to desist lest they should disturb the Queen. His gentle appeal producing no effect, he desired them angrily to be gone, or he would call in the guard to pull down the table, upon which Raleigh put up his money and departed; but the intemperate Southampton took offence, and, before he left, told Willoughby he would make him remember that evening. The handsome hero of Shakespeare's Sonnets possessed more beauty than dignity; meeting afterwards the Squire for the Body between the Tennis Court wall and the garden, Southampton struck him, and in the unseemly scuffle that ensued Willoughby pulled off a portion of Southampton's beard. Instead of laughing at the ludicrous rencontre, Elizabeth, when she heard of it, grew angry, and said, the Squire should have put the contumacious earl in confinement, and added, glancing at Essex, "she should like to see who would have dared to fetch him out."

CHAPTER XIX.

NEW POLITICAL COMBINATIONS.

There is in most matters of business much less interest than importance; it might consequently be tedious to attack the reader with a detailed account of the services performed by Raleigh for the miners, tinners, fishermen, and exporters of Cornwall and Devonshire. At the time, however, they were gratefully acknowledged by the persons concerned, who repaid with abundant attachment and affection the earnestness and assiduity which, as their Lord-lieutenant and Lord-warden, he displayed before the Queen and Council in their behalf.*

Towards the end of summer, while everything external, whether in nature or art, was gorgeousness and splendour, everything within, in the state as well as in the hearts of individuals, was ashes and poisonous dust. The false friendship between the triumvirs had risen and cleared away like a desert mirage, leaving bare and naked to the eye what had before been invested with beauty. Cecil beheld, in the slow decay of his father, the inevitable approach of the hour of supreme conflict for lead in the Government; Essex, in sullen discontent, conscious that the tide of his Court influence was rapidly ebbing away from about him, laboured to concoct those schemes which would, he hoped, enable him to crush both Raleigh and Cecil; and Raleigh himself, looking through the long vista of policy, saw many of the

* Carew, 'Survey of Cornwall.'

dark preliminaries to Essex's fall, though these only formed the avenue to another fall which he did not then see.

On the 4th of August, the Lord-treasurer Burleigh, who by the toil of seventy years had climbed to the highest pinnacle of power in England, succumbed to the united effect of old age and disease. His remains, after lying in state like those of a prince for more than three weeks, were, on the 29th of the same month, interred with equal pomp. A few circumstances connected with his obsequies are thus glanced at by a contemporary :—

"The Lord-treasurer's funeral was performed yesterday with all rites that belonged to so great a personage. The number of mourners were, one with another, about five hundred, among whom was the Earl of Essex, who, whether it were upon consideration of the present occasion, or for his own disfavours, methought carried the heaviest countenance of the company. They say he means to remain at Wanstead, since he cannot be received at Court, though he hath relented and sought by divers means to recover his hold; but the Queen says he hath played long enough upon her, and that she means to play awhile upon him, and to stay as much upon her greatness as he hath done upon stomach. The Lord-treasurer hath left the Queen's coffers so bare that there is but twenty thousand pounds to be found. Of his private wealth, there is but eleven thousand pounds come to light, and that all in silver, whereof six thousand pounds, with eight or nine hundred pounds in land, is bequeathed to his two nieces of Oxford. His lands are not so great as was thought, for Mr Secretary says, his own part will not rise to one thousand six hundred pounds a-year upon the rack. Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir John Stanhope are in speech to be sworn presently of the Council."*

Whatever countenance Essex might affect at Burleigh's funeral, his sadness by no means contributed to augment his wisdom. In eight days after Burleigh's obsequies, the

* August 30th, 1598. MS. State Paper Office.

jousts and tournaments which usually took place on Elizabeth's birthday afforded him an opportunity of putting an affront upon Raleigh, who on this occasion resolved to run at the tilt in honour of the Queen. The custom was, for the knights in imitation of the practice of chivalry to enter the lists dressed in particular colours, but otherwise disguised. Raleigh's colour was orange-tawny, and this having been made known beforehand, Essex resolved to annoy him by coming to the tilt-yard with two thousand followers all decked with the same colours. This was designed to make Raleigh, who had a smaller retinue, appear to be only a portion of the Earl's suite. But either through excitement or over-cagerness to display his skill in Elizabeth's presence, Essex is said to have run very clumsily, so as to excite the ridicule rather than praise of the lookers-on. Next day, hoping to do better, he appeared upon the course in green, but ran worse than on the preceding day. A murmur of disapprobation passed through the company, and some one asked, why so poor a tilter should covet to appear twice? Only, replied the person spoken to, that the man in green might be thought more absurd than the man in orange-tawny.*

Court and country were still full of speculations respecting the new Lord-deputy for Ireland, and the name of Essex became every day more and more closely connected with the office.†

Raleigh's domains in Ireland being grievously infested by some rebel, he ordered his steward in that country to set a price upon his head, a measure for which he was first careful to obtain Cecil's concurrence. When it appeared likely however that the fact would be made known to the public, the wily Secretary showed much anxiety to escape from responsibility. In this affair as in many others I miss

* Bacon, Apophthegms, 188. Clarendon in 'Reliquiæ Wottonianæ,' p. 190.

† Letter of John Chamberlain, October 20th, 1590.

in Raleigh that astuteness for which he generally obtains credit, and discover, instead, marked proofs of the recklessness which so long turned the current of public opinion against him. "It can be no disgrace," he writes to Cecil, "if it were known that the killing of a rebel were practised, for we see that the lives of anointed princes are daily sought, and we have always in Ireland given head-money for the killing of rebels, who are evermore proclaimed at a price; so was the Earl of Desmond, and so have all rebels been practised against. Notwithstanding, I have written this enclosed to Stafford, who only recommended the knave to me on his credit, but for yourself who are not to be touched in the matter, and for me I am more sorry for being deceived than for being declared in the practice."*

The rebellion now raging originated partly in the misgovernment of the country by the English, partly in the hope of aid from Spain, which had equipped and sent forth a large fleet to cruise about the British islands. To cope with this armament, a fleet was fitted out by Elizabeth, under the command of Howard, Mountjoy, and Raleigh, who gained some advantages over the enemy, though they came to no decisive engagement. Petty skirmishes took place at various points on the ocean, in which success declared sometimes for the Spaniards, sometimes for the English. Much fear was at one time entertained that several important ships, the arrival of which at Plymouth was unaccountably delayed, had been captured by the enemy, but they all came in one after another, and the alarm of the fleet and the country gradually subsided.†

Perplexed by the disturbed state of Ireland, the politicians of this country experienced great difficulty in determining what course to pursue. The two Court factions, one headed by Essex, Mountjoy, Southampton, and their friends;

* Raleigh to Cecil. State Paper Office.

† Joint letter to the Earl of Essex from Lord T. Howard, Lord Mountjoy, and Sir W. Raleigh, October 29th, 1598. State Paper Office.

the other by Raleigh, Cecil, Cobham, and such others as adhered to them, clearly foresaw that a final rupture was at hand, which could only be terminated by the headsman's axe. In such circumstances men naturally seek to put off the evil day, for though hostile courtiers think little of shedding blood, their eagerness is necessarily checked by the uncertainty as to whose blood it is to be. To gain time was consequently the aim of both parties. If Essex could be sent to Ireland, his adversaries would enjoy leisure to destroy his influence which had become intolerable, while he on the other hand had enterprises in contemplation which were not yet ripe, and needed the freedom of a wide field for their development.

Never was the dark hand of Nemesis more distinctly visible in human affairs. The perdition of Raleigh, Cecil, Cobham, and many others had been decreed by the conclave at Essex House, the vast range of whose villainy included the cutting short in certain eventualities of the old Queen's thread of life. Essex's character seemed at this time to have undergone a complete metamorphosis. Instead of the gay lively man of pleasure, who charmed people by his easy manners, he had become the reckless plotter, sanguinary in aim, unscrupulous in the means. What that aim was will become evident as we proceed. Infirmity of purpose, however, was still predominant in his nature; repeated counsel and deliberation left him undecided as to whether he should repair to Ireland or attempt to realize his plans in some other way. He would once more consult Bacon, who had ceased to be his adviser for more than a year and a half.* That able politician appears to have understood the whole drift of his scheme, and wishing to preserve him from ruin, advised him first against the enterprise; then if he would persist, cautioned him against those excesses of conduct which he foresaw he would almost surely commit.

Advice and warning were thrown away upon Essex;

* Birch, ii. 395. Mr Dixon, Story of Lord Bacon, pp. 141, 142.

who, having obtained the most ample powers ever granted to a Lord-deputy, together with an army of twenty-two thousand men, sailed for Ireland in the spring of 1599. With the particulars of his proceedings during his government I have no concern; but, in whatever business engaged, and how great soever the perplexities of his position, hatred of Raleigh, Cobham, and Cecil, predominated over every other feeling. Through them, he feared, Elizabeth would be enabled to form a just estimate of his conduct and motives, and therefore the sugared hypocrisy of his letters to her is thickly besprinkled with venom against them. "Is it not lamented," he says, "of your Majesty's faithfulest subjects, both there and here, that a Cobham or a Raleigh, I will forbear others (Cecil), for their places' sake, should have such credit and favour with your Majesty when they wish the ill-success of your Majesty's most important action, the decay of your greatest strength, and the destruction of your faithfulest servants."*

Through Cecil, if in no other way, these rancorous attacks could not fail to be made known to Raleigh and Cobham, who, perceiving with what feelings they were regarded, adopted all possible means to ward off the consequences. With untiring perseverance, Essex went on labouring by insinuations as well as by direct charges to undermine them in the Queen's regards. Bearing testimony to his own virtue and that of his friends, he again writes: "Value such honest men as we, that undergo all hazards and miseries for your safety and greatness; and cherish such gallant and worthy servants as this bearer, who will take it for as great happiness to be sacrificed for you, as others whom you favour most will be to be made great and happy by you. Cherish them, I humbly beseech you on the knees of my heart; for they must sweat and bleed for you, when a crew of those which now more delight you will prove but unprofitable servants."†

* Birch, ii. 418. † Ibid., ii. 424.

The fulsome cant addressed in these letters to her for whose "crooked carcase" he cherished so much contempt, and against whose power and life he was then plotting, enables us justly to appreciate the boasted chivalry of the writer. Who but must smile at his crafty interlacing of sentimental imposture with inexpressible malice? "If your Majesty," he continues, "whose parting with me so pierced my very soul, can be transformed by those sirens that are about you, then think that you shall quickly hear that a brave death shall ransom from scorn and misery your Majesty's humblest servant."*

These puerile rhapsodies, which might have told with a girl of seventeen, failed to throw Elizabeth and her faithful counsellors off their guard. Essex's intrigues with Scotland had not remained wholly concealed, though their full scope was still unknown.

The suspicion, however, began to take root, that the twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse at the command of the Earl, with such forces as the Stuart could muster and push at a short notice towards the Border, might be simultaneously employed against the English Government, under pretence of removing evil counsellors from about the Queen, and insuring the Scottish succession. A rumour was opportunely spread that a Spanish armament had put to sea, with the intent, it was assumed, to invade England. The alarm then displayed may doubtless have been caused in part by the naval armament which had just left Corunna; but there is reason to believe that the apprehensions of Elizabeth and her ministers were much deepened by doubts of Essex's fidelity. Whoever may have been the enemy that inspired dread, the whole kingdom was thrown suddenly into a ferment; large forces were levied in breathless haste, generals and other officers appointed, a bridge was thrown over the Thames at Blackwall, heavy chains were drawn across the streets of London, lamps were sus-

* Birch, *ubi supra.*

pended at night over the doors of private houses, and an army of six thousand men under the command of Lord Cumberland was charged with the protection of the capital.

Nor did preparations stop here. With unexampled rapidity a fleet was got in readiness to cope with the foe in the narrow seas, of which Lord Thomas Howard was appointed Admiral, and Raleigh Vice-admiral.* As the service, it was supposed, would brook no delay, Raleigh took leave of the ladies and his other friends at Court, and repaired to the fleet, in the hope probably of finishing the contest commenced at Fayal.† The clouds however which had darkened the political horizon speedily dispersed; the Spanish fleet, whatever may have been its original destination, put into Brest; Essex and his friends, whether in Scotland or Ireland, either lost heart or upon examination found their strength unequal to the enterprise they had projected. No enemy consequently appeared, so that the land and sea forces which had been brought together with so much precipitation were disbanded or recalled, and the whole system of public affairs relapsed into its habitual calm.

Encountering failure‡ and disgrace in Ireland, Essex, with a number of unscrupulous adherents, re-crossed the Irish Channel, and riding to Nonsuch where the Court then was, forced himself into the Queen's bedchamber, "where he found her newly up, with her hair about her face," and threw himself at her feet. Taken thus unawares, Elizabeth suffered herself to be overcome by emotion, and was betrayed into some expressions of affection which the Earl interpreted into forgiveness. "Coming from her Majesty to go shift himself in his chamber, he was very pleasant, and thanked God, though he had suffered much trouble and storms abroad, he found a sweet calm at home."§

For some hours he was allowed to remain in this delu-

* Winwood, i. 91. † 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 112, 116, 117.
‡ Cecil to Neville Winwood, i. 105.
§ Rowland White, 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 127. Winwood, i. 118—125.

sion; but in the afternoon, Elizabeth having enjoyed some leisure for reflection, changed her tone, reproached him with neglect of duty and misconduct, ordered him to give an account of his proceedings at once to such members of the council as happened to be present, and summoned all the lords to meet immediately at the Palace. This alteration in Elizabeth's behaviour was attributed to Cecil and that *party*, a phrase by which Raleigh and Cobham were signified.

On Michaelmas Day, on the eve of which he had returned, Essex appeared before the lords in the council-chamber, standing bareheaded at one end of the table, while Cecil, with the articles of accusation in his hand, stood at the other. His defence being deemed unsatisfactory, he was ordered back to his chamber; while the triumphant Secretary, who now beheld himself at the head of an immense following, sat down to a grand banquet with Shrewsbury, Nottingham, the Lords Thomas Howard and Cobham, the Lord Grey, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir George Carew.*

Essex's confinement still continuing, the public business of the country was neglected that the attention of Elizabeth and her ministers might be concentrated on his affairs. No hand has yet raised the veil which Cecil, Cobham, Raleigh, and their friends dropped at this time over their proceedings, which it cannot be doubted were all more or less regulated by the wish to deliver themselves from their arch-enemy, whose relatives and adherents shook the Court with their intrigues; while his military retainers who had flocked over from Ireland disturbed the London taverns by their incessant brawls. Though the tragedy was to be long in performance, the curtain had been raised, and the actors were on the stage. Masks of the thickest dissimulation were put on by many of those engaged, from the terrible consciousness that they were moving through a labyrinth, the issues of which, whether they advanced or retreated, might be death. Essex's unappeasable hatred for his Court

* 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 129.

antagonists had been fully revealed in his letters to the Queen, who had placed them in Cecil's hands: this fact must not be lost sight of. The true state of the case, therefore, was this: it was known that dangerous machinations had been carried on in Ireland while the army of which Essex boasted he was the soul,* seethed and panted for some employment, the nature of which remained unknown; numerous officers who had returned without leave,† hovered in mysterious sullenness about the capital, fretting and chafing at their leader's imprisonment; that leader himself looking upon what he suffered as a deadly affront, the desire of revenge for which was exasperated by every day that was added to its continuance. No art, no falsehood, no meanness, it was obvious, would be shrunk from which might appear to facilitate a reconciliation with the Queen, and then woe to the authors of his humiliation!

About the beginning of November, some indications of relenting towards Essex‡ supposed to be discoverable in Elizabeth, Raleigh, who had laboured to keep her firm to her purpose, and who knew the full scope of what the least weakness on her part boded to him and others, affected to be ill, and kept his room.§ To convince him, however, that he misinterpreted her conduct, "her Majesty very graciously sent to see him."

Whether it were the air of the Court, or the physical condition of the atmosphere, something at the same time occasioned much show of illness among the great. "Lord Nottingham," says White, "is sick at Chelsea, the Lord-keeper sick at London, Sir John Fortescue takes physic, Sir Walter Raleigh hath an ague."‖ Cecil himself, through hard work which saved him from the necessity of shamming, likewise fell ill, and was for several days unable to attend

* Birch, ii. 424.
† 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 131.
‡ Winwood, i. 254.
§ Rowland White to Sir Robert Sidney, November 4th, 1599.
‖ 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 150. Rowland White to Sir Robert Sidney, December 13th, 1599.

to public business. The capital, meanwhile, was from day to day troubled with sad stories about Essex's sufferings, which were described by his partisans to be so great that little hope could be entertained of his recovery. His gay sisters and his wife wore cheap black in the hope of working on the Queen by their mock humility; while London swarmed with libels, some for, others against the Earl—the latter supposed to be sharpened by Raleigh's pen—but all calculated to keep alive the general excitement.

Elizabeth had now an opportunity of learning how unwisely she had acted by elevating Essex through her favour to so great a height that his popularity overtopped her own. No intelligent person doubted that his maladies were counterfeit, yet eight physicians were found to certify their reality. The clergy in troops flocked to his bedside, or prayed for him as for the head of the state in their pulpits,* and having circulated a report of his death, caused the bells of their churches to be tolled. On the white walls of Elizabeth's own palace libels of the most shocking kind were written against her chief minister, while the tranquillity of her life was hourly disturbed by hosts of importunate solicitors, whose earnestness made it evident that they postponed the interests of the kingdom to the private convenience of the Earl.

The year 1600 opened upon the state of affairs above described. Mountjoy having been appointed Lord-deputy of Ireland, looked to be made a privy-councillor before his departure, and Cobham and Raleigh anticipated the same honour. Whatever at heart may have been the Queen's feelings, she entered with much apparent zest into the festivities of Christmas and New Year, which were celebrated at Richmond, where Essex's brother-in-law, Percy, having quarrelled with Dorothy, was a perpetual courtier, cultivating assiduously the friendship of Raleigh, from

* "Their doubtful speech tending to sedition." Sidney Papers,' ii. 156.

which he many years afterwards derived consolation under totally different circumstances. It may be guessed, without unfairness to Cecil, that it was his influence which secretly barred Raleigh's promotion to places of trust, though he did not stand in the way of his reaping a harvest of credit, for the manning and victualling of Ireland were in a great measure ordered by his advice; the Queen likewise took him about with her when she went on visits, but otherwise did nothing towards the gratifying of his ambition.

Inferring from Essex's long imprisonment Elizabeth's resolution to employ him no more in state affairs, both Cecil and Raleigh appear to have viewed with less uneasiness the prospect before them; at the same time the latter found leisure to pay and receive visits; his niece Barbara, now Lady Sidney, had become an active politician, going about from one great person to another, in furtherance of her husband's business: from the house of Lady Leicester she flitted to that of Lady Buckhurst, or Lady Essex, or Mrs Fytton. Occasionally she bestowed her presence on Sir Walter Raleigh and his lady, and found from both an agreeable welcome. As candidates for the same places, Raleigh and Sidney may sometimes have indulged those feelings which rivalry begets; but in the company of his wife and niece Raleigh's stern resolves melted away, at least in appearance, so that he professed his readiness to promote the interests of his frequent competitor.*

Little was for awhile thought of, either at Court or in London, but the Earl's imprisonment and the manner in which it was likely to end. Conjecture was busy on all sides, yet few, if any, ventured to look forward to the actual dénouement. Sportive wits and superficial thinkers put their own constructions on events, while both Raleigh and Cecil beheld with anxiety the ebbs and flows of the Queen's humour, upon the stability of which it was impossible to

* February 21st, 1600. 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 168.

count beyond the vicissitude of the hour. Out-of-doors people indulged in all kinds of speculations, colouring according to their own leanings the prospects of Essex, who, in the course of March, was removed from the Lord-keeper's house to his own, which he found quite as far from Court. "For, before he had the help of a friend at hand, whereas now he is left to himself, unthought of, and poor Sir F. Berkeley hath so strait a charge to be ever in his company, and to observe his doings, that it is a question which holds the other prisoner." *

In the mean time, perceiving that no speedy progress was made, or likely to be made, either in his own affairs or those of Essex, Raleigh with his wife quitted London for Sherbourne. Unable, through the pressure of business, to watch over the education of his only son William, Cecil intrusted the care of him to Raleigh, who made him the playmate of his own Walter. The whole party was received and entertained by Northumberland at Sion House; after which the journey westwards was continued.

In London the gossips were much perplexed to divine the object of this retreat from Court; for which being unable to assign any good motive, they assigned a bad one, setting it down to the sullenness of disappointment.† During Raleigh's absence, Elizabeth turned the beams of her favour on Sir John Stanhope, who could not remain two days away from Court without being inquired for.‡

Bearing in mind the plan agreed upon between Essex and his fellow-conspirators for the disposal of Elizabeth's crown and crooked carcase, the reader will be able to appreciate the nobleness of soul which inspired the following sentences:—"That I presume now again, most dear and most admired sovereign, to send my humble lines unto your Majesty's gracious, princely, and divine nature, the oppressions of mine own heart—breaking with such fearing

* Dudley Carleton to Chamberlain, March 29, 1600.

† White to Sidney, March 15th, 1600. ‡ 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 188.

and incomparable sorrow, the shrinking of my body, so as to fail of his wonted ability to do your Majesty service. . . . . To encourage me to be an importunate petitioner for myself, I have a lady, a nymph, or an angel, who, when all the world frowns upon me, cannot look with other than gracious eyes, and who, as she resembles your Majesty most of all creatures, so I know not by what warrant she doth promise me grace from your Majesty." *

The Earl enjoyed ample opportunities of trying the force of his epistolary style during the vicissitudes of his confinement, which, sometimes less, sometimes more strict, lasted till the 26th of August, when he was set at liberty, to weave the web of his last treason, and take, as he hoped, full vengeance on those whom he regarded as the authors of his humiliation.

It seems not improbable that this graceless favourite was confederate with those who drew up the artful and alluring scheme, which now began to be circulated through the kingdom, for insuring to Elizabeth a Catholic successor. Baits were held forth in it to all classes: the nobles were to be delivered from the oppression of wardships, the Franklins were to be advanced to the rank of gentlemen: the common people, if they cheerfully co-operated in supporting the Church's cause, were to have restored to them all the common pastures of which they had been deprived by grasping courtiers. Two other advantages were to be promised them: first, they were to be exempt from military service out of the realm; second, all foreign heretics—meaning Flemings and Germans—were to be expelled, in order that the whole ministry of the country might revert into the hands of natives. A vast plan of spoliation lurked dimly in the background—individuals of all ranks who refused to espouse the Church's cause were to be despoiled of their lands, which, by way of reward for bloody service rendered, were to be lavished upon active and

* Essex to Queen, April 4th, 1600.

zealous Catholics. If Essex and his adherents were, as can scarcely be doubted, in communication with the sacerdotal plotters, he may have been the very orthodox prince* whom the Jesuits intended to put forward as the rival of James of Scotland.

While the Court party, adverse to Essex, appeared to have sunk into inaction, the rebellious Earl and his accomplices were straining every nerve in the hope of crushing them completely. In spite, however, of these machinations, Raleigh, whatever may have been the motive of his retreat, enjoyed at Sherbourne a longer respite than usual from intrigue and toil. The country in the south of England, in spring and early summer, wears its sunniest and most soothing aspect—the sweetest flowers known to our climate are then in bloom, the nightingale fills the brief hours of darkness with music, and if the soul be open to delight, it must experience it in that season. Raleigh was a man of many tastes, with an equal relish for the beauties of nature, the charms of poetry, the absorbing fascinations of metaphysics, the grand scenes of history, the excitement of politics, above all, for the fierce joy of conflict and victory.

To experience he knew not what, he was now suddenly recalled to London, which he reached probably about the day of Essex's private trial before the lords; when he shed tears which could hardly have been those of penitence.†

* Two years later, the French ambassador, Beaumont, speaking of the Jesuits, says, "they not only refused to acknowledge and obey the Queen, but entered into conspiracies of all kinds against her person, and into alliances with enemies of the kingdom, in order to effect her downfall." Raumer, ii. 183.

† Egerton, then Lord-keeper, observed dramatically in the Star Chamber, "that Essex confessed his fault with tears, saying that the tears of his heart had quenched all the sparks of pride that were in him." Chamberlain to Carleton, June 23rd, 1600. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XX.

HIS PART IN THE ESSEX TRAGEDY.

The siege of Ostend, which then concentrated upon the Netherlands much of the attention of Europe, was viewed in England with peculiar anxiety. The Cardinal Archduke Albert, recently married to Clara Eugenia Isabella, Infanta of Spain, was carrying on the siege at the head of an immense army. Prince Maurice, with the forces of the states, lay encamped near at hand to obstruct as far as possible the movements of the Spaniards. In the city, Raleigh's old antagonist, Sir Francis Vere, held the chief command, and gave proofs during the three years, three months, and three days* which the siege lasted, of valour, patience, and masterly soldiership.

No event of those times exhibited more characteristic features of Spanish policy: the Cardinal Archduke, being bent on the capture of the city, reeked little of the sums of money or number of lives it might cost, for as the gold ebbed forth from the Treasury, fresh supplies were forwarded from Spain, while new levies from all parts of Philip's dominions marched to the camp over the graves of their predecessors. Eighty thousand bodies are said to have been interred in the surrounding swamps, and the deadly nature

* Reckoning on speedy success, the Infanta, in the hope of interesting Heaven in the matter, made a vow not to change her linen till the end of the siege. She was as good as her word, so that her under-garments assumed the tawny hue long known under the name Isabel. Raumer, i. 221.

of the struggle having been widely circulated by rumour, fear at length began to pervade the ranks of the young recruits, and led to a formidable mutiny. In letters from Cardinal Albert and his wife Clara Eugenia to Philip III. and the Duke of Lerma, some found at Simancas, others in the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid, we have a minute history of all the incidents of this contest. The German troops, it appears, at once badly paid and disheartened at the prospect before them, refused obedience to their general; the gentle means at first employed are described by the Cardinal and alluded to by his wife; but we are indebted to a note, probably in the handwriting of the Duke of Lerma himself, for a knowledge of the fact, that a number of the mutineers, the writer says forty, had to be shot in front of the trenches, before tranquillity could be restored to the army.

To witness these proceedings, as far as they could be witnessed from the enemy's lines, Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Cobham, and the Earl of Northumberland were sent over by Elizabeth about the beginning of June. Their mission aimed no doubt at something beyond the gratification of curiosity, and excited both in France and England a considerable amount of speculation.* Raleigh and Cobham executed their trust, whatever it may have been, noiselessly; but Northumberland, having much of Hotspur's blood in his veins, contrived to entangle himself in a quarrel with Sir Francis Vere,† which in the sequel occasioned him no little trouble. The visit of the three friends to the Netherlands camp, as well as to the beleaguered city, was brief; they may have been intrusted with sums of money for the use of the besieged, or instructed to attempt some negotiation with Maurice—whatever their errand was, it

* Sir Henry Neville, English Ambassador in France, attributed their visit to political motives, and was piqued at being kept in the dark. Winwood, i. 230, 231.

† Lodge, iii. 24. To this quarrel Lord H. Howard refers in the rhapsodical letter published in Raleigh's Works, viii. 756: 'Secret Correspondence,' p. 69.

proved bootless, for after one of the most protracted and brilliant defences on record, Ostend fell into the hands of the Spaniards.*

Early in July Raleigh was again at Court, watching the efforts made by Essex's friends to obtain his freedom and restoration to favour. On the 26th of August the Earl, as I have said, was set at liberty, but forbidden to appear at Court, and informed that he lay still under the Queen's displeasure. In these circumstances he proceeded on a visit to the house of his uncle, Sir William Knollys, at Graves, whence after a while he returned to Essex House, where his evil counsellors immediately began to flock about him. From this time forward his story becomes closely bound up with that of Raleigh, whose extraordinary favour with Elizabeth† formed one of the chief sources of Essex's discontent and hatred towards the Queen. All the Court gossips, especially those who leaned towards the Earl, beheld with extreme envy the influence exerted by Raleigh over the course of public affairs, to which they constantly attributed the ill success of Essex's intercessors.

During the whole of this autumn Elizabeth was either at Oatlands or Nonsuch; but in order to afford Cecil an opportunity of enjoying the short leisure which he now found it necessary to allow himself from the cares and toils of office, Raleigh retired again to Sherbourne, where, in the beginning of September, he received his friend, who had at the same time the pleasure of being in the company of his little son. Even this short period of relaxation might have been fraught with ruin could Essex have obtained an interview with the Queen, who, in spite of the affronts and insults he had put upon her, might have proved too weak to withstand his eloquence and arts of cajolery. To circumscribe his power had now become a necessity, and therefore the Queen was prevailed upon to resist his importunities to have

* Winwood, i. 371.
† 'Sidney Papers,' ii. 210.

the farm of sweet wines continued to him,* which would have supplied revenues for multiplying his adherents. History abounds with frivolous apologies for princes who have suffered themselves to be led astray by evil counsellors; the same excuse is pleaded for Essex's crimes: Cuffe, Meyrick, Blount, Father Wright, and others, suggested to him, we are told, his desperate enterprises. This is false. He had entered upon the guilty course which led to his overthrow more than eleven years before, when he began his correspondence with Scotland, in which he designated himself the "Weary Knight." His enmity to Raleigh dated as early as the defeat of the Armada, and the incidents of every service in which they were engaged together only tended to deepen his resentment. At sea before Fayal he and his friends had openly discussed the policy of Raleigh's execution—this fact was never forgiven or forgotten by Raleigh—it clearly revealed to him what fate he must reckon upon if Essex and his faction ever again became predominant. The breach had now been widened, and the danger of a relapse of fondness on the part of the Queen infinitely augmented. Cecil, Cobham, Raleigh, and Stanhope never doubted that their necks would be soon on the block if they relented for a moment towards their remorseless enemy. They accordingly laid before Elizabeth a startling outline of the position she occupied; they showed her that Hayward's false chronicle of Henry IV., with the deposition and death of Richard II., only typified the contest between her and Essex; they may also have suggested that Shakespeare's tragedy on the same subject had been inspired by Southampton, and aimed at familiarizing the public mind with the deposition and murder of princes—a conviction to which she alluded when she inquired of Lambard, "Know you not that I am Richard?"

On the other hand, Essex laboured to circulate the report that Raleigh and Cobham had entered with others into

* Winwood, i. 271.

a conspiracy to cut him off, or even to murder him in his bed, if he attempted to approach the Court; he affirmed also, and laboured to have it believed, that in conjunction with Cecil, they had formed the design of bringing in the Infanta as the successor of Elizabeth. Of this fictitious scheme he conveyed an account to James Stuart, pointing out to him with plausible minuteness the apt location of the conspirators for co-operating with Spain: Raleigh, he observed, was stationed in the west, Cobham in the east, Sir George Carew in Munster, Burleigh, Cecil's elder brother, in the north, while Cecil himself, commanding the Treasury, could dispose at will of the whole strength of the kingdom. Of these malignant and false suggestions the fruit afterwards appeared at Winchester and in Palace Yard; for the present, the current of events set in a direction exactly contrary to the views of the falsifier.

In some cases the animosity of the Court factions broke out into acts of personal violence; thus Lord Grey of Wilton attacked the Earl of Southampton on horseback in the Strand, which led ultimately to a duel in the Low Countries; Sir Christopher St Lawrence, son to the Earl of Howth, one of the ruffians brought over by Essex from Ireland, coolly proposed, in revenge of the affront offered Southampton, to murder Lord Grey upon the high road; the same St Lawrence, seeking to get up a brawl at a tavern, drank to the health of Essex, then in prison, and said he would send his rapier through any man who refused to do the same; but when Raleigh's half-brother, Sir John Gilbert, who happened to be present, went to St Lawrence's lodgings, and told him that he had refused to drink Essex's health, the bravo quibbled out of his threat.

In her partiality for Essex, Elizabeth had been grossly censurable; overlooking his incompetence, she had constantly raised him above superior men—had sacrificed or imperilled the interests of her country to gratify her personal preference—had squandered the resources of the state on her unworthy

favourite, and had facilitated and smiled at the manœuvres by which he gained the popularity that made him dream of her dethronement, and his own succession to the crown. During the development of this plot, Elizabeth often unconsciously verged on her last hour. The policy of killing or sparing her was discussed by the conspirators as openly as any other incident of their drama, and one of Essex's myrmidons, more zealous or drunken than the rest, undertook with a recklessness exceeding that of the other conspirators to realize the wish of all.

Before matters, however, had reached this point, Essex had matured his scheme for insurrection in the capital. His house in the Strand, a lofty and spacious pile of building, opening on one side upon the river, with which it communicated by a broad flight of steps, and having on the other side a large court, divided from the street by a high wall and strong gates, had long been the resort of all the noblemen and gentlemen of his faction. In the chapel belonging to this fortress—for such in truth it was—seditious clergymen habitually preached to constantly-increasing audiences. Essex himself interrupted his licentious courses in order the better to work the lever of religion in the service of rebellion: his piety became the theme of popular admiration; he prayed frequently, he associated through apparent preference with godly ministers, he went with them through numerous external acts of devotion; while in the adyta of his mansion, Jesuits and other Papists sat in secret conclave, organizing the approaching movement which was to be consummated in the blood of Raleigh, Cobham, Cecil, Stanhope, Northumberland, and, if the necessity should arise, of the old Queen herself.

Blinded by their own confidence, the conspirators persuaded themselves that they carried on their operations as unnoticed as if they had possessed Gyges' ring. They forgot the sharp-sightedness of gold. Through the thick walls of Essex House the Government clearly saw their doings, and

took measures which ought to have prevented the explosion of their madness. Before it was yet too late, Raleigh, knowing his cousin, Ferdinando Gorges, to be among the conspirators, sent him word that he desired to speak with him alone on the river, after which, not doubting that the gallant soldier would accept his invitation, he got into a wherry, and pushed towards Essex Stairs. This was on the fatal Sunday morning which had been chosen for the attempted insurrection. Gorges disclosed Raleigh's desire to Essex, who, in furtherance of the design of his bloody father-in-law, bade him go; the meeting took place on the river, where Raleigh counselled him "to depart the town presently, or else he would be sent to the Fleet." Whereupon he replied, "Tush, Sir Walter, this is not a time for going to the Fleet; get you back to the Court, and that with speed, for you are like to have a bloody day of it. Whereupon Sir Walter again advised him to come forth from that company; and then Sir Ferdinando shoved off the boat wherein Sir Walter then was, and bade him hie him hence—which he did, perceiving a boat to come out of Essex Stairs, wherein were three or four of the Earl of Essex's servants with pieces, who had in charge either to take or kill Sir Walter Raleigh upon the water."* On the same errand as that of Raleigh, Egerton, Lord-keeper, Popham, Lord Chief Justice, and Knollys, the Queen's Chamberlain, went from the Government to Essex House, in the hope of stifling the insurrection in its birth. The gates, however, had no sooner been swung open than the three peaceful envoys, on stepping into the court, found themselves in a throng of bravos and assassins, who with hoarse and threatening voices vociferated, "Kill them! kill them!" By the leaders it was judged more politic to preserve their lives, at least for the moment, and to hold them as hostages. The massive gates were then once more thrown open, and out rushed the conspirators, in all about two hundred noblemen and gentlemen, in their doublets

* MS. State Paper Office.

and hose, with rapier in one hand and pistol in the other. Making at once towards the City, they passed through Temple Bar, shouting as they went along that they were up for the defence of religion and liberty, against those who were plotting to sell England to the Infanta. Had it been hot weather, the contagion might have spread, but in that cold February morning their exclamations fell on deaf ears. Sheriff Smith having been deceived by Essex on the point of religion, had promised to join the conspirators with a body of citizens, but now found himself unable to keep his word. Everybody gazed in astonishment at Essex and his followers, as at a troop of brigands on the stage, whom it would have been madness to join. In vain they flourished their rapiers—in vain Essex harangued from a balcony—in vain he repeated the hackneyed falsehood that his life was in danger from the daggers of Cobham, Cecil, and Raleigh: no one lent credence to what he uttered, no one sympathized with him, or raised an arm in his defence. It was soon perceived, therefore, that the game was lost, and the conspirators turning round, retraced their steps towards Essex House. Several of those who would not rise for them now rose against them—their retreat was attempted to be cut off—a fight ensued between them and their expected friends, in which Sir Christopher Blount, striking right and left, killed one of the assailants, but was at length disarmed, and conveyed, covered with wounds, to a place of safe custody. Essex escaped, and reached his own house by water.

Under no possible circumstances could the Earl have succeeded; Raleigh at the head of his soldiers guarded the palace; at Charing Cross and other passages through Westminster barricades were thrown up, while Nottingham, Cumberland, Grey, and other faithful noblemen were ready at all points to defend the Queen.* Essex himself, whatever show of valour he might have made on other occasions, exhibited none now. He was neither a Catiline nor a

* Birch, ii. 469. Cecil to Sir G. Carew. State Paper Office.

Pisistratus, to both of whom he was at the time compared, having neither the craft of the one nor the courage of the other. When Nottingham, therefore, dragging with him along the Strand a number of great guns, presented himself before the gates, and threatened, in case of resistance, to blow up Essex House, the rebellious Earl surrendered, and at three o'clock in the morning of the 9th, was, together with the Earls of Rutland, Southampton, and Lord Sandys, conveyed to the Tower by his captor and Sir Thomas Garratt. Several of his accomplices, as the Lord Cromwell, Lord Monteagle, and Sir Charles Danvers, were on the afternoon of the same day conducted to the old fortress by Sir Walter Raleigh.*

The insurrection having been thus suppressed, the eddies of danger might have been no longer supposed to revolve around Elizabeth; but she was never so near her death—the assassin Lea, to whom I have already alluded, now formed the design of delivering Essex and his accomplices from the Tower by means which would hardly have suggested themselves to any but an insane brain. Six ruffians were to meet about the close of evening at the door of the Queen's private apartment; to stab or otherwise dispose of the guard on duty, to rush into her chamber, seize upon her person, and by threats of instant death, to extort from her a warrant for the release of the prisoners. Experience had not revealed to them the character of the Tudor, who would have suffered herself to be cut to pieces in her chair rather than yield to men and menaces so base. Finding no seconds to his infamous purpose, Lea resolved to attempt the execution of it himself. Accordingly, repairing one night about nine o'clock to Whitehall, he succeeded in entering the palace as far as the lobby, from which there was a direct entrance to Elizabeth's chamber. How he acted, the guard Poyntz, who encountered him there, shall describe: coming in out of the presence chamber, Lea, he says, "went to the further

* MS. dated February 19th, 1601. State Paper Office.

side of the lobby towards the privy chamber, yet stayed before he came to the door, and leaned his back against the closet, to which place I came also, and leaned my back as he did between him and the privy chamber door. He saluted me by name, and I him again, but methought his manner of usage towards me was very strange, for he moving himself near to me, did lean so hard towards me as he could, and looked earnestly upon me with a stern countenance; his colour very pale, yet so sweating, that many drops of sweat appeared on his face. After referring to the affair of the previous Sunday, Lea asked, 'Is not her Majesty at supper?' and I answered, that she was not; he paused awhile, and then asked 'Are not the lords yet come home?'"

The ruffian, it is evident, meant the worst, but being seized by paroxysms of terror, which paled his face and chilled his blood, could not screw up his courage to attempt at once the Queen's life. What he wanted was to incense the soldier to draw upon him, which might have seemed to justify his drawing also; a scuffle would then have ensued, in which he doubtless hoped to kill or disarm his antagonist, and then there would be nothing to prevent the carrying out of his design. The soldier's patience, however, proved more than a match for Lea's insolence: neither hustling nor thrusting could provoke him to draw his sword.

For the attempt thus made, Captain Thomas Lea, it is well known, was arrested, tried, and hung at Tyburn.

Upon Cecil and his friends now devolved the responsibility of dealing with the captive Earl and his associates. To the offence they had committed, the punishment affixed by the law was death, though, owing to the relations in which the chief criminal had stood to the Queen, it was doubted whether her resolution to inflict the penalty would hold. This was a period of extreme peril to Raleigh. Essex had charged him with intent to murder; had put forward that intent as the cause of his rising in arms, and having thus pledged himself by word and deed to the truth

of his accusations, it was not doubted that under any circumstances he would pursue the quarrel to its worst issues. At Court, in the Church, in the country, the offender's friends were numerous; his relatives also were high in power, and abounded with opulence; above all, the Queen herself, who constituted the mark shot at by his guilt, was connected with him by blood, and by other ties still stronger. For all these reasons it seemed not improbable that a course of leniency might be pursued, in which case the lives and fortunes of all who had reason to fear his after-vengeance would be compromised.

Cecil, though not wanting in courage, was less distinguished for that quality than for craft and caution. None better than he understood Elizabeth's nature, her yearning towards her kindred, her sudden changes of humour, her placability towards those whom she loved, her anxiety to avoid the charge of substituting vindictiveness for justice. Considerations based on these facts might, it appeared to Raleigh, check the Secretary's ardour midway and betray him into a line of conduct fraught with ruin to himself and his friends. Among writers who have undertaken to pronounce on the merits of this case there are not a few who shrink from according their full approval to the course that Raleigh now took; they forget who and what he was—forget that in force, breadth, and elevation of intellect he never perhaps had any equal among Englishmen—forget that he saw clearly the menacing front of danger which met his eye on almost every side, and that the study of his own position forced upon him the conviction, that by one path only, and that narrow and slippery, could he discern the least chance of escape for himself and those who acted with him.

So hemmed round by circumstances, he determined to act in conformity with the dictates of his intellect, at whatever decision his contemporaries or posterity might arrive. To preserve Cecil from the wavering which he felt would be fatal to them both, he laid before him arguments the force of which no logic could parry:—

"I am not wise enough," he says, "to give you advice; but if you take it for a good counsel to relent towards this tyrant, you will repent it when it shall be too late. His malice is fixed, and will not evaporate by any of your mild courses; for he will ascribe the alteration to her Majesty's pusillanimity, and not to your good-nature, knowing that you work but upon her humour, and not out of any love toward him. The less you make him, the less he shall be able to harm you and yours, and if her Majesty's favour fail him, he will again decline to a common person. For after-revenges, fear them not; for your own father was esteemed to be the contriver of Norfolk's ruin, yet his son followeth your father's son and loveth him. Humours of men succeed not, but grow by occasions and accidents of time and power. Somerset made no revenge on the Duke of Northumberland's heirs—Northumberland that now is thinks not of Hatton's issue. Kellaway lives that murdered the brother of Horsey; and Horsey let him go by all his lifetime. I could name you a thousand of those, and therefore after-fears are but prophecies, or rather conjectures from causes remote: look to the present, and you do wisely. His son shall be the youngest earl of England but one, and if his father be now kept down, Will Cecil shall be able to keep as many men at his heels as he, and more too. He may also match in a better house than his, and so that fear is not worth the fearing. But if the father continue, he will be able to break the branches, and pull up the tree, root and all. Lose not your advantage; if you do, I read your destiny.

"Let the Q. hold Bothwell while she hath him, he will ever be the canker of her estate and safety. Princes are lost by security and preserved by prevention. I have seen the last of her good days, and all ours after his liberty.

"Yours, &c.,

"W. R."*

This letter has been variously interpreted, some affect-

* Murdin, 'Burleigh State Papers,' p. 811.

ing to believe that the Earl's death was not urged, while others, with whom I agree, maintain that Raleigh argued for nothing less. In periods of violence, when the leaders of adverse factions have no choice left but to kill or be killed, the supreme law of nature determines their decision. Essex had long made it evident what fate he would assign to Raleigh should he ever acquire over him the power of life and death; and therefore Raleigh acted as a man instinctively acts towards the assassin whose dagger is at his breast. This must be his defence if he need any.

On the 19th of February Essex's trial took place in Westminster Hall, before twenty-five peers, with Buckhurst as Lord High Steward. His defence was as weak as it was false; he was sentenced to death, and being conveyed back to the Tower, was ordered to prepare for execution. He now retracted the charges against Raleigh and Cobham which he had previously put forward as the causes which justified his insurrection. At his trial he expressed great contempt for death, but as the fatal hour drew near, his constancy deserted him, and he sank into a state of pusillanimous dejection. It is honourable to our nature, that sympathy with the fallen is almost universal among mankind, how guilty soever the sufferer may be. For Essex, extraordinary commiseration was felt; the people loved him for his pleasant countenance, winning manners, and easy affability towards all; even his enemies, now that he had been brought low, and lay at their mercy, shared the pity and unreasoning sorrow of the multitude.

We are all as familiar with death as we are with life; it is round about us at every moment, yet the preliminaries with their shadows and their mystery are sure, if we concentrate our looks on one who is dying, to sadden us profoundly. It is with a feeling, therefore, approaching disquietude or pain that we throw ourselves back to the evening of Shrove Tuesday, 1601, and read with Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Constable of the Tower, the following icy

note from Cecil, preparing him for the reception of Essex's executioners :—

"Because we would fain have these two persons secretly conveyed into your Lordship's hands, and Mr Lieutenant's within the Tower; where, when you have them, you are there to order them, and may with less suspicion make them provide their bloody tool, whereof I would there had never been occasion. We have sent these persons to you with Mr Sheriff or his deputy: we send you two, because if one fail, the other may perform it to him, of whose soul, Almighty God have mercy. We will send you ere night some other directions; and her Majesty writes she will have seven or eight noblemen, named by her to be there, who shall bring our warrants to you; and therefore it is fit you leave some officer at the gates in the morning early to let them in, as also to let in some couple of divines who shall come with our letter or the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"Your loving friend,

"Robert Cecil."*

Soon after one o'clock in the morning, Essex was warned by the Lieutenant of the Tower to prepare for death. As the chill gray light of a February dawn broke over London, the Lords Cumberland, Hertford, Darcy, Morley, Compton, and Byndon, who with the Constable, Lord Thomas Howard, were to witness the execution, presented themselves at the Tower gate. About two hundred knights and gentlemen, actuated by various motives, likewise obtained admittance. Then at the head of a section of the guard came Sir Walter Raleigh, whose duty it was on such occasions to keep order and overawe the crowd.

The scaffold stood in the high court, above Cæsar's Tower, four feet high, and in breadth three feet, railed with small poles—the block was a piece of wood some half a foot

* Letter for the execution of my Lord of Essex, February 21st, 1601. State Paper Office.

over, and half a yard long, rounded at the upper side. The spectators sat on a form three feet from the scaffold; Essex, who wore a black-wrought velvet gown, and black satin suit, laid his head upon the block, being neither bound nor blindfolded. He cried with a loud strong voice: "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" not moving, though the executioner performed his office badly, in giving three blows.* At the last moment the Earl expressed a wish to speak and be reconciled with Raleigh, who had retired into the Armoury, whence in an agony of tears he saw without being seen; but no one conveyed to him the dying man's message, so that it was not until the moment of mutual forgiveness had gone for ever that he learned the desire of his adversary to die in peace with him.

* MS. State Paper Office. Compare Mr Dixon's account of the treason and death of Essex. 'Story of Lord Bacon,' 4th edition, pp. 133—181.

CHAPTER XXI.

FINAL ECLIPSE OF HIS FORTUNES.

After Essex's execution the trials of his friends followed rapidly, and they were successively dismissed to their account with little ceremony, and less pity.* Through Raleigh's interference two of the conspirators—Sir Edward Baynham and Mr Lyttleton—were pardoned; but in conformity with the custom then prevalent, Raleigh stooped to accept money for exerting his influence with the Queen, and received, it is said, no less than ten thousand pounds from Lyttleton.

It has often been argued that the death of Essex proved fatal to Raleigh, who began, we are told, to foresee the ruin it was to bring upon him as he returned home from the Tower in his barge. But may not this be throwing too much subtlety into the reading of history? Had Essex lived, and been restored to favour, Raleigh's lease of life would certainly have been short. It is possible that had the Earl not gone to Ireland, or engaged in a course of Scottish intrigue, his power at Court might have sufficed to balance that of the Cecils', and thus have given Raleigh the opportunity of being a perpetual mediator between the parties. This position was of course rendered unnecessary by his overthrow, which may, therefore, have proved prejudicial to that extent; but, as will presently appear, the source of Raleigh's misfortunes lay in the union of Essex's

* Birch, ii. 492.

surviving friends with Cecil, and those who favoured the Scottish succession.

Raleigh, as we are told by Bacon, used to say that the women about the Queen were like witches, who could do a great deal of harm but no good, and his own wife furnishes us, in a letter, with an illustration of this truth. Elizabeth, though she had taken Raleigh himself into favour, had never forgiven poor Bessy Throgmorton, who was incessantly made the butt at which calumny shot its arrows. We hear much of the Queen's discernment and knowledge of mankind, which, however, by no means included a knowledge of women, since she allowed some of the worst of her sex to hover about her, and libel the best. Thus we find Lady Kildare, an audacious intriguante, not only in high favour, but able, by malicious slanders, to inflict pain and injury on others.

"I understand," says Lady Raleigh, "that this is thought by my Lady Kildare that you should do me that favour as to let me know how unfavourable she hath dealt with me to the Queen. It is true that I should not have mistrusted so unhonourable a thought in her to me without good proof; but I protest, as you know, I never understood it by you; neither did I ever see or hear from you, since her Ladyship did me that good office; therefore, it was but her mistaking, which she useth too much. I only say this, that for the honour I bear her name, and for the ancient acquaintance of her, I wish she would be as ambitious to do good as she is adapted to the contrary. Thus ever wishing you all honour,

"I rest your assured poor friend,

"E. Raleigh."*

Outwardly, Elizabeth bore up bravely against the effect produced upon her mind by the execution of Essex, though inwardly fed upon by the vulture that never ceased to prey

* Lady Raleigh to Cecil, March, 1601. 'Burleigh Papers.' B. M.

upon her spirits till she was laid among her ancestors in Westminster Abbey;* yet, in the hope that by change of scene and the bustle of travel she might shake off the load which weighed upon her heart, she undertook a progress to the southern coast, and was at Basing when Henri IV. arrived at Calais.† His object in this visit was to watch the movements of Cardinal Albert, then with a formidable army before Ostend. Desirous of maintaining a good understanding with the French king, Elizabeth sent over to him Sir Thomas Edmondes, charged to express her friendly feelings.‡ In return for this compliment, Henri despatched Marshal Biron, with a suitable retinue, to England; but instead of making their way to the Queen at Basing, the Frenchmen repaired to London, where, not being expected, no preparations had been made for their reception. By mere accident Raleigh, just then arrived in town, and learning how matters stood with Biron and his suite, took some pains to blunt the edge of their disappointment. By way of filling up the interval till horses could be procured, Raleigh took Biron and his friends to see the monuments in Westminster Abbey, and afterwards entertained them with an exhibition of brutality in the bear-garden, which, he says, "they took great pleasure to see."§ When the post received the orders, without

* See her Confessions to Beaumont. Birch, ii. 505.

† Camden, 'Annals of Elizabeth,' ii. 642.

‡ Henri, however, either could not or would not repress the inclination of his Catholic subjects to vent their rancour against Elizabeth. In March, 1602, a species of tragedy, representing the death of Mary Queen of Scots, was brought upon the stage by certain low actors, which the English ambassador caused to be suppressed. Winwood, i. 398. A few months later, a new attack upon Elizabeth was meditated by some Italian performers, who covered the walls of Paris with placards, announcing their intention to bring forward a piece entitled "L'histoire Angloise contre la Reine d'Angleterre;" but Winwood stopped the play, and caused some of the principal actors to be imprisoned, though the Council objected to him that Elizabeth had allowed the performance of two pieces offensive to France,—"The Duke of Guise," and "The Massacre of St Barthélemi."—Winwood, however, replied, that this was previous to the accession of Henri IV. Ibid. 425.

§ Raleigh to Cecil, September 6th, 1601. 'Burleigh Papers.' B. M.

which they could not take up horses, the ambassador left London, and resting one night at Bagshot, arrived next day at Lord Sandys' mansion, "The Vine," where, on horseback in the park, Biron had his first audience of Elizabeth.

Some French historian alluded to, but not named, by Camden, relates certain startling particulars respecting this visit. Elizabeth, according to that writer, carried about with her, by way of a keepsake, Essex's skull, which she exhibited to Biron, indulging at the same time in violent denunciations of his offences. She likewise intrusted him with a message of harsh counsel to Henri, pressing upon him the necessity of eschewing clemency in his treatment of rebels.*

The French noblemen and gentlemen, laying aside their usual style of foppery, appeared in sober black; and accommodating himself to their humour, Raleigh rode to London, got his tailor to make him a dress of black taffeta, and soon showed himself among the foreign gallants at "The Vine" as lugubriously habited as the best of them.

It was Elizabeth's wish that Lord Cobham, who probably spoke French fluently, should accompany Biron to Calais; but preferring the pleasures and gaieties of Bath, his Lordship felt strongly disinclined to accept the mission. Knowing how much any show of unwillingness on his part would grieve the Queen, Raleigh pressed him to comply: "I, that knew your Lordship's resolution when we parted," he says, "cannot take on me to persuade you; I will only say this much, it is but a day and a half journey hither; the Queen will take it exceeding kindly, and believe herself more beholding unto you than you think. The French tarry but two or three days at most. I will presently return to Bath with your Lordship. . . . . It were long to tell the

* In Biron's case Henri certainly displayed no clemency. He was executed July 21st, 1602, in the court of the Bastille, where he fought with the executioner, and was at length cut down when in a state of extreme fury. To palliate this barbarity, Henri accused his victim of having slain five hundred persons in cold blood, and other enormities. Winwood, i. 427.

Queen's discourse with me of your Lordship, and pending it, I durst not say that I knew you were resolved not to come, but left it to the estate of your body. I need not doubt but that your Lordship will be here, yet I wish you to hold such a course as may best fit your honour and your humour together. If you come she will take it most kindly; if you come not, it shall be handled as you will have it." *

About this time the report of an expected invasion by Spain was once more spread, to end, as on former occasions, in nothing. Raleigh, when he heard of it, lay ill at Sherbourne, which set aside his intended visit to Cobham at Bath. He held still with Cecil a half-jocular correspondence, which wore the appearance of amity; dismissing the subject of the Armada, he says:—"I have by this bearer sent you the gloves; but it is intended that if they serve not your own hands, you must of your grace return them again." To inspire in Cecil the persuasion of a special preference, he afterwards adds: "Bess says that she must envy any fingers whatsoever that shall wear her gloves but your own." †

From the easy tone of familiarity observable in these letters, as well as from a variety of other circumstances, the inference might have been drawn that Raleigh and Cecil at least pulled the same way in politics; yet secretly it was otherwise. Owing, as he did, everything to the Queen, Raleigh, with an inexplicable lack of prudence, seems to have allowed the measure of her days to bound his horizon; whereas Cecil, though he owed her no less, immediately upon Essex's overthrow, began to build up a new place of refuge for the future.

I have said that Essex's partisans, looking about for fresh engagements, betook themselves, not to Raleigh, but to the Secretary, who, wrapped in the mantle of impenetrable selfishness, cherished no enmities or friendships which appeared likely to interfere with his interests.

* Raleigh to Cobham, September 12th, 1601. 'Burleigh Papers.' B. M.
† Raleigh to Cecil, September 19th. 'Burleigh Papers.' B. M.

Among the Earl's forlorn clients was that notorious "ranter" Lord Henry Howard, whom all honest persons mistrusted, whom nobody loved, and who in the sequel proved a much greater miscreant than they who now thought worst of him could have believed. Nevertheless, Cecil soon made up his mind to employ him. Though Elizabeth was growing old in years, her fierce passions had done more for her than time; and Cecil, who watched her with the eyes of a lynx, detected all the noiseless footsteps of decay, whether in body or mind. Sentiment was out of the question with him. His worship was for the gods who had most to give, or who seemed likely to be longest in power. There can scarcely be a doubt that he carefully passed in array before his mind all the competitors for the succession—The Infanta, Arabella Stuart, James—and satisfying his mind that, upon the whole, the last was most likely, he determined, with due caution, to take the necessary steps towards an approximation to him. Raleigh, Cobham, Northumberland, whom, in secret conclave, the "ranter" called a triplicity, were to be kept in ignorance of his northern tendencies; intelligence of which Howard, with the halter about his neck, undertook to make known beyond the Border. No date can be assigned to the first advance in this treasonable movement, which like dawn on the Alps, first touched one elevation, then another; passing from Essex to his sisters, from his sisters to Lord Rich, from Lord Rich to Howard, from Howard to Cecil, till a long trail of glittering baseness could be traced from Richmond to Falkland.

It will be remembered that when Raleigh returned from Cadiz in 1596, he found that a trial pending, when he left, between him and his former steward, Meeres, had during his absence been decided against him. The intricacies of this Meeres' affair are all but inscrutable; whether in success or failure, in favour or out of favour, at the head of a fleet, in the effervescence of Court gaiety, or in the stagnant gloom of the Tower, Raleigh is still followed by the shadow of

Meeres. At first he evokes him like a baleful exhalation from the Dorsetshire soil, develops his talent for business, intrusts him with the management of his property, awakens his yearning for wealth, and then hopes for gratitude. He had studied Machiavelli to very little purpose. The higher Meeres rose, the higher he wished to rise; and as he could do this at no one's expense so easily as at Raleigh's, he naturally took the most obvious course; and having entered on the career of a reckless pettifogger, laboured to strengthen himself against the day when the unveiling of his roguery might place him in antagonism with his master.

Nothing in history is more common than men who make their way to distinction by fraud; but Meeres had the peculiar good luck to work his way up over a splendid ladder —Raleigh, Essex, Lady Walsingham, and her sisters. Upon the whole, the groundwork of his manœuvres, as unveiled by Raleigh, is dark, but dotted with glittering points, which will enable the reader to make out the map for himself. Through a series of circumstances into which it would be tedious to enter, he, from a trusted servant, became a subtle and inveterate enemy, and, with his whole kith and kin, devoted himself to the carrying on of hostilities against his former master. A history of this legal crusade would be as prolix and perhaps as interesting as the famous Beaumarchais trial; but I must for the present content myself with transcribing one letter on the subject from Raleigh to Cecil, which contains information of the most extraordinary kind. "It is true," he says, "that Meeres is bound to the good behaviour by Sir George Trencher, Sir R. Horsey, and three or four other justices of this shire, but the recognizance is not above forty pounds, the rest that are bound with him are two or three rogues of the county, and when a councillor's commandment is laid, it serveth always for a *supersedeas*, and did it not, yet by me no advantage shall be taken. That his wife is a kinswoman to my Lady of Essex it is true, she was a poor man's wife of this country, but too good for such

a knave, and being a broke piece that I think her, or would have had none of this knave, hoping thereby to have him upheld by the Earl of Essex, took her; but the Earl did not make show to like Meeres, not admit him to his presence, but it was thought that secretly he meant to have used him for some mischief against me; and if Essex had prevailed, he had him used for the counterfeiter, for he writes my hand so perfectly as I cannot any way discern the difference. My wife writes unto my Lady Walsingham touching Meeres, for he took into his house a sister of his wife's, who had some two hundred marks' portion, which the knave hath cozened her of, and turned her off a begging: now that sister being as dear to my lady as Meeres' wife, she cannot esteem such a knave, who, if he respected her, would not so abuse her sister as he hath, who being unmarried and begotten with child in his house, is now by him thus undone, cozened and cast off; besides, I hope that my Lady Essex cannot say but in matters of more importance, it hath pleased you and your friends to do her service since her lord's death; but howsoever it be, if you should not think it fit that he submit himself, having used towards me many more cozenings and villainies than ever Daniel did to my Lady Essex, I shall be contented with your orders therein, and dare make my Lady of Essex judge in the cause. Meeres hath sent down sixteen subpœnas to me and other poor men since he was committed." *

The shadows, as we advance, close in more thickly about Elizabeth, and in the same proportion about Raleigh, for the thread of his good fortune, though not of his life, was interwoven closely with her existence. Cecil's star was in the ascendant, and there was an air of confidence in his bearing which they who knew nothing of what was transacting behind the scenes found it impossible to account for. Nowhere in history has the truth made itself more apparent, that greatness is often found to be no match for crafty

* Add. MSS. 6177, p. 187, September 25th, 1601.

littleness. Cecil, who soared over Bacon's head, likewise soared over Raleigh's, because there was no moral repugnance in his nature to employ any means which promised to attain the end he aimed at. His power was built on Elizabeth's weakness, of which he skilfully took advantage in those innumerable conferences which he enjoyed through the necessities of his place. Raleigh came to her more seldom, and often about unpleasant affairs, such as the designs of the Spaniards,* the struggles going on in Ireland,† the raising of money, the restrictions to be put by policy on the freedom of trade.

In the autumn of 1601,‡ Elizabeth stood for the last time face to face with her parliament, and connected with this meeting there were circumstances which rendered it peculiarly memorable and melancholy. Her sensibilities were keenly alive, but her frame was wasted, and her strength failing fast. Men viewed her according to their leanings, with a throb of anxiety, or with a sentiment of impatience. Let us accompany her on her farewell visit to St Stephens: being in the House of Lords, and making her way towards the throne, her knees tottered, and she would have fallen had not two gentlemen stepped forward and supported her while she ascended. Lord-keeper Egerton, in the speech he then delivered, made one of those strange allusions which sounded like a passage of a funeral oration: —"I have seen her Majesty wear at her girdle," he said, "the price of her own blood; I mean jewels that have been given to her physicians to have that done unto her which God will ever keep her from; but she hath worn them rather in triumph—though for the price, that hath not been valuable."§

The House having been adjourned, the Queen, with

* Add. MSS. 6177, p. 201, October, 1601.
† Ibid. October 15, 1601.
‡ October 27th, 1601. D'Ewes, Journal, p. 620.
§ Townshend, 'Last Four Parliaments of Elizabeth,' p. 130.

what feelings we may in part conjecture, descended from the throne and, "after room made, came through the Commons to go into the Painted Chamber, who graciously offering her hand to the Speaker, he kissed it, but not one word she spoke unto him, neither as she went through, few said, 'God bless your Majesty!' as they were wont in all great assemblies. And the throng being great and little room to pass, she moved her hand to have more room, whereupon one of the gentlemen ushers said openly, 'Back, masters, make room,' and one answered stoutly behind, 'If you will hang us, we can make *no more room*;' which the Queen seemed not to hear, though she heaved up her head, and looked that way towards him that spake. After she went to Whitehall by water." *

Raleigh in this parliament represented Cornwall. The questions which then came before the House were important and difficult, descending by various ways into the arena of political economy, and taxing all the energies of powerful minds, as yet unversed in its subtle mysteries. They were called on to determine how far the right of exportation ought to be extended, and where it should be stopped by considerations of State. It fell to their lot also to decide when the two branches of the legislature were brought into collision how the contest should be carried on, and which should give way. The privilege of parliament had remained up to that time undefined, sometimes giving way before authority, sometimes venturing to assert the sacredness of its power, and referring obscurely to the great well-spring from which it was afterwards to derive supplies so profuse of authority and influence. Some alarm was felt and expressed by Cecil at the evident determination of the popular House to overstep the limits of its ancient practice, and interfere with matters supposed to lie beyond its competence, which he denominated a disputatious spirit. Afterwards, when the Commons took views different from those of the

* Townshend, p. 179.

Lords—when he himself represented and interpreted the ideas of the body to which he belonged—he found it necessary to use some roughness with the peers in order to bring them to their senses. The occasion was this: having listened to the reasons of the Lower House, arranged and delivered by Cecil, Buckhurst, the Lord-treasurer, pronounced the views of the Speaker to be strange, improper, and preposterous. The Commons retired, Cecil harangued upon the insult, and was then sent back to point out to the peers the offence they had offered to the people's representatives. Cecil, keen, cool, and full at the same time of indignation, suggested by his language far more than he expressed, and wrought so salutary an effect on his hearers, that after humming and murmuring together for some time, they retreated from their position, and virtually acknowledged themselves to be in the wrong.

In a subsequent debate, when the House was clearing for a division, several members who desired not to vote at all made towards the door, when Mr Dale, observing a friend in the retreating crowd, seized him by the sleeve and pulled him back, that he might afford his support to Dale's party. This gave rise to a fierce altercation, and several were inclined to censure very severely the member who had thus, according to their notions, interfered with the freedom of others. Raleigh, however, remarked aloud that he could not join with those who blamed the action, since he himself had often done the same; the Comptroller declared it was a heinous offence, and that the member who had been guilty of it, meaning Mr Dale, ought to be called to the Bar of the House. Cecil, who with many others mistook the Comptroller's meaning, and thought he shot at Raleigh, said it would be most unseemly to have a gentleman of his place and quality called to speak at the Bar, by which the House was thrown into so great an uproar that it may almost be said to have resembled the French Convention during the stormy days of the Revolution.

While such was the aspect presented by the surface of affairs, the mysterious under-currents to which I have alluded were constantly widening and running with greater violence northwards. Shortly after the execution of Essex, James, who had been at first restrained by fear of the disclosures which might have been made during the Earl's trial, despatched two embassies to England, both furnished with secret instructions, but aiming at different objects. The Earl of Mar and Edward Bruce, afterwards Lord Kinloss, were intrusted with the development of his secret designs; while the Duke of Lennox, a person of upright character, may be said to have had a mission of compliments.

Raleigh, Cobham, Northumberland, and their friends had been represented to James by Essex first, afterwards by Cecil and Howard, as men of desperate character, entirely hostile to his claims. But might not his informants have ends of their own to answer, prejudicial to his interests? He would send and see. Conscious of cherishing purposes which he dared not avow, he desired to discover whether or not suspicions of their real nature were entertained beyond the Border. In heart he was ready to become the Macbeth to a female Duncan; he could joke with assassins, suggest without betraying himself the work expected of them, and then insinuate how the wretches were to be dealt with; he could intrigue with priests and Jesuits, and arrange for a rising in conjunction with them in case of necessity; he could skilfully direct his agents to scatter firebrands among the multitude, or insinuate menaces at Court against all such as opposed his succession, while they avoided advancing so far as to put themselves within swing of the axe.

Few transactions in our history open up to investigation a more obscure maze than the dealings now carried on between James and his dupes in England. Elizabeth, he perceived, through weakness partly, partly through weariness of life,* had allowed Cecil to become king there in

* 'Secret Correspondence,' p. 6.

effect, so that without purchasing his co-operation or putting him out of the way, his policy must encounter insurmountable obstacles. That he would have experienced no repugnance to have had recourse to the second alternative may be inferred from the assassination of Gowry; and that Lord Henry Howard would joyfully have become his coadjutor, the affair of Overbury may suffice to convince us. Cecil's murder was rendered unnecessary by the readiness he showed to become James's instrument, and by his malevolent solicitude to vindicate to himself pre-eminence in baseness.

During two years James's accomplices at the English Court compassed round Elizabeth with a girdle of fawning and treachery, maligning and neutralizing the influence of all such as might have opened her eyes; while with masterly craft and cunning they shaped the circumstances of the situation into conformity with the wishes of the Stuart. There were numerous competitors for the credit of these doings: Essex's sisters, Penelope and Dorothy, Cobham's intriguing wife, the Countess of Kildare, the Careys, male and female, the Earl of Nottingham, and Lord Thomas Howard, who all with more or less forwardness paid their devotions to the rising sun. The acrimony and hate by which the movements of Lord Henry and Cecil were directed appear at times to transcend the bounds of sanity. Yet motives for their conduct may be discerned. In splendour of appearance, in dignity of manners, in courage, in breadth and elevation of views, in eloquence, in intellect, Cecil inwardly recognized the superiority of Raleigh, and could not doubt that if he were allowed to bring to bear all these qualities and attributes upon the mind of James, the result would be absolute domination. The course dictated by such a conviction was obvious, and he resolved to pursue it. In Lord Henry the predominant sentiment was an unquenchable aversion for everything great or good, or a love of evil for its own sake. In this odious category he de-

lighted to involve his whole kith and kin, maintaining that Nottingham would with more pleasure direct his great guns against Durham than he had against Essex House, and that the entire Howard family were actuated by the same feelings.

The means by which this treasonable correspondence was carried on indicate the consummate skill of the chief actor. When the letters left London, they followed no certain route, proceeding sometimes to Ireland, sometimes to France, sometimes to the western coast of Scotland, but always reaching Falkland or Holyrood without mischance. Yet there were various layers, so to speak, of agents and emissaries through whose hands they had to pass—spies upon spies—informers, assassins, some high, some low, English, Irish, Scotch, all governed by one motive which kept them steady in their treachery—the belief that when what they called "The Great Day" * should arrive, James's gratitude would be commensurate with their services.

Even upon Elizabeth's mind the hostile acts of Cecil were not without effect. Raleigh already found himself beginning to stand more and more in the shade; James had commissioned the Duke of Lennox to make an attempt upon his loyalty, a fact which Cecil interpreted into evidence that there existed some reasons for believing that loyalty to be incomplete. On this ground he counselled the man whom he still outwardly treated as a friend not to make known the circumstance to the Queen, who, he affirmed, would assuredly regard him as a mere pick-thank.†

Cecil himself meanwhile walked every hour along the edge of a precipice. One day upon Blackheath, while driving with the Queen in her carriage, a courier rode up to the window with a packet containing secret letters from Scotland. Elizabeth asked to see them. Cecil felt a choking sensation as of the tightening of a rope about his neck; he

* 'Secret Correspondence,' p. 8.
† Ibid., p. 48.

would, however, make an effort to save his life:—"There may, please your Majesty, be infection in these papers," he said. "Permit me to step out and purify them in the open air before they touch your Majesty's hands." Elizabeth's eagle eye was upon him; still, with the dexterity of one who had performed a thousand acts of guilt and cunning, he contrived to extract the treasonable missive, after which the packet was submitted to the Queen.

As men approach the crisis of their fate they sometimes become conscious by instinct, rather than by foresight, that the cloud which is big with their destiny, though not yet visible, is nevertheless surging up towards the horizon. Under the weight of this presentiment Raleigh's mind was now bowed down. He was indeed liable throughout his career to the depressions and uprisings incident to a powerful and buoyant spirit, more addicted, however, upon the whole, to cheerfulness than gloom. But his hours were dark now; the dawn of his trials was breaking upon him; concern for his wife and son began to mingle with his public cares; he learned to look upon his castles, his manors, his lordships, his patents, his offices, as so many creations of a desert mirage, and resolved to make an attempt, if his overthrow should be sought, to provide himself with the means of escape, or to realize something which he might bequeath to his family. He was therefore disposed to listen to the counsel of Sir George Carew, Governor of Munster, who, considering the troubled state of Ireland, became convinced that an absentee landlord stood little chance of realizing an adequate income from his estate, since even resident landlords were often stripped of everything, and beheld the waves of rebellion roll up triumphantly to the very gates of their castles. Richard Boyle, afterwards Earl of Cork, now desired to become the purchaser of Raleigh's Irish estate, and obtaining letters of introduction from Carew, came over to England, saw Raleigh, and after the necessary preliminaries, the transaction was completed in the summer of 1602.

The event was now fast approaching by which Raleigh's prosperity was to be finally eclipsed. Elizabeth, assailed at once by disease and remorse, and bearing upon her shoulders the weight of seventy years, now began to stagger under the burden and exhibit an inclination to lay it down and be at rest. She had outlived most of her friends, as well as most of her enemies; her heart, peculiarly prone to love, in the attempt to secure which she had wasted her life, was now scorched and withered, and stung incessantly by fatal remembrances; pomp and state and flattery found no longer a welcome or an echo in her breast; she looked forth cheerlessly upon the world, which every day was growing more cold and chill, and as she possessed a keen insight into human motives and conduct, perceived but too plainly how many of those about her were impatient of her peevishness, and longing to exchange the relaxing grasp of her good old hand for the advantages and honours which they confidently expected from her successor.* Among this calculating herd Raleigh was not to be found. He had owed everything to Elizabeth, and almost seems to have determined that his own star should go out with hers, though his reason could not but be convinced that since the interests of others were bound up with his own he was constrained to make what preparations he could against the coming change.

Centuries have elapsed since the death of Raleigh's queen, yet we are still unable correctly to estimate her character. We move through the chill of mighty shadows created by ourselves, and instead of seeking to disperse them, suffer them irresistibly to influence our judgment.

* It had not yet been determined who that successor was to be, and prodigious efforts were made on the Continent to insure the election of some Catholic prince. If, says Father Cresswell, "the two principal personages (Henri IV. and Philip III.) persevere in their apparent union to promote this affair, it is now in a better condition than ever. If it be managed prudently, the result is unmistakable, but both will lose much by allowing the opportunity to pass." Varios puntos de los avisos que dio el Padre Creswelo relativos à la eleccion del nuevo Rey de Inglatiera, 28 de Abril, 1603. Simancas.

Such as she was, however, when death seemed to be preparing to lay his icy hands upon her form, the heart of all England thrilled with anguish.* During the forty-five years of revolution which cast down for ever the power of Catholicism in England, and inaugurated the reign of free inquiry, she had stood at the head of the British monarchy, bubbling to the brim as she was with fierce Celtic blood, and maintaining her position with indomitable courage, yet all the while hardly knowing what she did, since the fangs of the old church still griped her conscience, and regulated much of her conduct and modes of thinking.

Her struggles, however, were internal, or known at best to a few intimate friends. In the eyes of the people she had always appeared to be the type and symbol of Protestantism, that is, absolute freedom of belief and speculation, and therefore they hailed her presence among them almost as that of a religious Saviour. Here, then, was a motive more than sufficient to justify the passionate ardour with which men of true English blood, with Raleigh at their head, clung to the old Queen. They watched her looks, they reckoned with profound perturbation the years she had lived, and the probability that she could not live many more; yet it was only by degrees, with strange aversion and reluctance, that they gave credit to the reports of her failing health, which nevertheless became more frequent and alarming, issuing forth like black midnight from the palace, and falling like the first symptoms of plague upon the bewildered nation.

It was at Whitehall that the symptoms of her fatal malady first became visible, upon which, by the advice of her physicians, she removed to the milder air of Richmond.†

* Writing only five months before Elizabeth's death, Beaumont says that she was not merely loved, but worshipped; that her eye was still lively, that she displayed much spirit, seemed attached to life, and took great care of herself. Raumer, ii. 184. By the following March an entire change had come over her, both in body and mind, and the task devolved on Beaumont of chronicling her rapid decline and death.

† During the illness of the Queen several meetings (of the Catholics) took

But the conflict going on within her was not so much with disease as with Nemesis. Essex may not have deserved the regret she felt, but this did not prevent her feeling it. His enemies were about her, Raleigh, Cecil, Cobham, and nearly all the members of her privy-council, who had regarded the Earl as a state criminal, while Elizabeth regarded him in a different light. They approved what had been done, her reason approved it too; but affection, which dominates in woman to the last, would not, and did not, approve it.

What her outward bearing may have been signifies nothing—she could for a while act as others have acted, and did act so as to impose even on the observing—but the torrent of feeling became at length too strong to be stemmed, and Elizabeth, relinquishing the endeavour, sat in hopeless dejection upon the floor, refusing to be comforted by man or woman, rejecting food and physic alike, and resolving to expiate the offence she believed herself to have committed by a voluntary death. Messalina lying dejected and deserted, waiting for the executioner in the gardens of Rome, presents a far less touching spectacle than the great English Queen closing her glorious career by suicide,* for her abstinence from all that might have preserved her amounts to no less. Around her flitted her courtiers like spectres, with their thoughts half at Richmond, half in Scotland—the

place, with the design of seizing upon the Council, and proclaiming Arabella. Relacion de Antonio Dutton, 18 de Mayo, 1603. Simancas.

* Of the circumstances attending Elizabeth's voluntary death we have the following account from contemporaries:—"I had good means to learn how the world went, and find her disease to be nothing but a settled and confirmed melancholy, insomuch that she could not be won nor persuaded, neither by the council, divines, physicians, nor the women about her, once to taste or touch any physic, though ten or a dozen that were continually about her did assure her, with all manner of asseverations, of perfect and easy recovery if she would follow their advice." Chamberlain to Carlton, March 30th, 1603. State Paper Office. A French letter in the same collection, dated April 4th (N.S.), 1603, takes precisely the same view, and adds, by way of explanation, that she refused food and medicine,—"Comme si l'apprehension et mepris de sa vieillesse ou quelque autre ressentiment secret qui l'on attribue au regret de la mort du feu Comte d'Essex l'eussent émené à la chercher ou desirer elle-même.

honest and earnest entreating her to take food, and preserve a life on which their own in many cases depended—but she had played out her part, and determined to close it then. When all but insensible, she was lifted from the carpet, and placed on a bed, where by the clergy present her thoughts were sought to be directed towards another world. Some endeavoured to wring from her the name of the person whom she desired to be her successor, and by interpreting what she intimated by dumb show according to their own wishes, obtained the recognition of James Stuart.*

Then the spirit of the great Tudor departed, and one of her kinsmen,† who, as a distinguished writer‡ remarks, had been hovering like a raven about her death-bed, effected his escape from the palace, and fled northwards with the welcome tidings. Never more perhaps in the experience of this country shall the death-bed of a sovereign be contemplated with so much solicitude. Equal affection others may perhaps inspire, but many feared lest with Elizabeth the light of truth and freedom should be put out, and the nation be forced back, as on the succession of her sister, through torrents of blood, to the hated creed of Hildebrand and Leo X.

Raleigh himself looked on his dying mistress with more anguish perhaps than any other man. No discovery hitherto made impeaches the sincerity of his love for that grand old woman, who though she had stinted the growth of his ambition, was nevertheless the author of his fortunes; and by her profuse bounty had enabled him to found, at the expense of a quarter of a million sterling, that commonwealth beyond the Atlantic which has bestowed his name on two of its cities, and with whose history his memory will be for ever united.

* Earl of Cork, 'Preface to Carey's Memoirs,' p. 17.

† Chamberlain, March 30th, 1603. State Paper Office.

‡ Sir Walter Scott. 'Notes on Earl of Cork's Preface to Carey's Memoirs,' p. 23.

With Elizabeth a whole order of things, half barbarous, half heroic, passed away, and England was destined to put on a new face, sterner and more sanguinary, though stained at the outset by licentiousness and riot, by unexampled folly in the prince, by incredible meanness in the people, or at least in that portion of the people who, not preserved by Puritanism, flocked around the Merry Andrew who came from beyond the Tweed to replace the woman who for forty-five years had ranked foremost among the sovereigns of Europe.

From Richmond Elizabeth's remains were brought to London,* where for several days they lay in state at Whitehall, while the metropolis rang with proclamations of the new sovereign. Very slowly, however, did the melancholy news travel to the distant parts of England, no one having any interest, and few the inclination, to enlighten the common people respecting their loss. Preparations were meanwhile made for the funeral, at which Raleigh may be said to have performed the last public act of his life. Of all who had been elevated to opulence and grandeur by the Queen, few perhaps now sorrowed for her loss; but the people, in whom death had revived all their ancient loyalty, thronged about the cortège with sobs and tears,† thinking, as the writers express it, "that the brightest sun that ever shone in England had set." They were right. With her to her resting-place went the greatness and grandeur of the sixteenth century, the glory of our heroic age, which had accomplished for England more than was ever accomplished

* "The Council went on Saturday to Richmond, and that night brought the corpse with an honourable attendance to Whitehall, where the household remains. The body was not opened, but wrapt up in cere-cloths and other preservatives." Chamberlain to Carleton, March 30th, 1603. State Paper Office.

† Yet in 'Items of Intelligence,' forwarded to Spain by Father Creswell, a Jesuit, it is suggested, that the only token of sorrow manifested by those present was the mourning they wore. He adds, that never was sovereign less lamented. 'Varios Puntos,' &c., &c. Simancas.

in a period of equal duration ;* which had given the country a new religion, which had prepared it for a series of revolutions of unexampled importance, and inaugurated those movements, political and social, which are still in full activity, throbbing through the heart of society at home, agitating all Asia and America, and foreshadowing to thoughtful minds the advent of an order of things such as the modern world has never yet looked upon.

To herald her to her grave with becoming solemnity and gloom, the plague broke out, and filled the whole metropolis with terror, achieving for London what Herod projected for Jerusalem, when he shut up all the nobles in the Senate House, with orders that they should be slain as soon as he should breathe his last. Elizabeth had no desire to imitate such a policy, but nature did it for her, signalizing the extinction of the Tudor line and the accession of the Stuarts by one of the most fearful pestilences that ever desolated a civilized country. The streets, the public places, the churches, were black with mourning, to which a deeper sable would have been added could the people have foreseen what the prince, whose coming they now looked for, was to bring upon them and upon their children. Elizabeth was at peace, but had bequeathed to many among her faithful servants persecution, imprisonment, and the axe, whose edge already glittered in the atmosphere, and was soon to fall on many an innocent and noble neck.

* Mr Froude points out the weak and divided state of England at Elizabeth's accession; and Coke, giving the result of her long reign, describes its flourishing state at her death. 'Detection of the Court and State of England,' p. 29.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

SECRET ENMITY OF JAMES.

No period of transition in our annals is so fraught with difficulties as that which takes us from our heroic age to the age of brass. Under the Tudor queen, if there was cruelty, there was likewise grandeur; barbarism masked itself in pomp—vice wore a glittering livery—and if chastity laid aside her girdle, it seemed to be with the unconscious recklessness of the world's infancy.

In little more than one revolution of the moon an entire change passed over the face of England. Had an army of locusts marched from the Tweed to the Land's End, devouring every green thing as it went, and leaving everything behind arid and withered, the metamorphosis could not have been more complete. All that was poetical, all that was chivalrous, all that was beautiful in the intellectual aspect of the nation vanished like a dream, to make way for coarseness, selfishness, and those hateful enormities which blasted the Cities of the Plain.*

* Raumer, a writer of ability and moderation, says, ii. 191, "that the greatest favour historians can show James is to skip his reign, in order to arrive at the more attractive period of the Civil Wars: but it is in the events of his reign that we must seek the causes of those wars, so that we cannot bestow too much study on that revolting epoch."

It was in the midst of this new order of things that Sir Walter Raleigh found himself, when, having laid his great mistress in her tomb at Westminster Abbey, he returned with the other mourners, to breathe the biting air which had just begun to blow from the north.* Of two unpardonable offences he already stood accused: he was said to have advocated in council the establishment of a republic;† or, if that should be deemed premature, that articles might be insisted on limiting the number of followers to be brought by the Scottish king into England.‡ James, whose political creed was that of a Turkish Sultan,§ abhorred all men who talked of liberty, and resented the limitation proposed by Raleigh and Fortescue as an audacious interference with his prerogative. He lived long enough to regret‖ that their views had not been adopted, when shivering on the brink of that gulf into which his breechesless retainers afterwards hurled his son.

Had Raleigh profited more by the study of Machiavelli, the writing of his life might have been a pleasanter task. The simplicity with which he fell into Cecil's net is provoking. Had he allied himself with Dorothy, with Lady Kildare, or with any one else who would have broken the weasel's neck,¶ instead of representing his grand white head bent by despotism to the block, we might have had to relate a story of successful intrigue, terminating in a dukedom. But the hero of the narrative would not then have been Raleigh. We might have been amused by the farce,

* Nichols, 'Progresses,' iii. 626.

† Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii. 515.

‡ Osborne, 'Traditional Memoirs,' ii. 7.

§ On his journey from Scotland to London, he ordered a poor pickpocket to be hung, without judge or jury, at Newark. Coke, p. 33.

‖ The English, in fact, immediately began to betray signs of discontent: "The King brings with him," says Father Creswell, "thirteen of the principal men of Scotland, together with five hundred of his nation, which is a cause of some murmuring here." 'Varios Puntos de los Avisos,' &c. Simancas.

¶ 'Secret Correspondence,' p. 21.

but should have missed the tragedy; while his name, instead of glittering like some bright particular star over the dark waste of James's reign,* might have glimmered obscurely among those of the Cecils, the Northamptons, the Nottinghams, the Suffolks, and the Doncasters.

Elizabeth's obsequies being over, Raleigh made ready in his office as Captain of the Guard to move northwards, in order to bring home his new sovereign, which filled his enemies with uneasiness; for in spite of all that had been done to prejudice James against him, they feared that the fascination of manner which had enthralled Elizabeth's imagination might produce a similar effect upon that of her successor. To guard as far as possible against such a result, Lord Henry Howard hastened to Scotland, that, being constantly about the new king, he might enjoy a monopoly of slander. In spite, however, of this precautionary step to back up the calumnies of the 'Secret Correspondence,' Cecil's cowardly heart still quaked with terror, to lessen which Lord Kinloss, at the instance doubtless of Lord Henry, addressed him in the following language: "Cobham and Raleigh are forlorn in our accounts, and I beseech you think not that any subject in England is able to win ground in us to the least disgrace of Sir Robert Cecil, for we are exceeding far inamorat of him, and you shall acquaint such as you love of Essex's friends, that if any of them have such business in head, or mean to follow such a rout, it will turn them assuredly to their ruin, for this is settled in the heart of King James. This is only to yourself."†

To provide against all probable contingencies, James despatched to London a number of blank warrants, to be filled up and used by Cecil at his discretion. Early in April Raleigh received one of these, containing a prohibition

* 'Hume, 'History of England,' speaks of Raleigh as "the only man in the nation who had a high reputation for valour and military experience," vi. 99.

† 'James's Correspondence with Cecil,' edited by Mr Bruce, p. 51.

of his journey to Scotland, from which he might have divined the sequel. Having now been joined by Kinloss, Cecil wrote, in concert with that courtier, a triumphant account of the insult they had offered Raleigh to Lord Henry, for James's satisfaction.

"We think it not amiss," he says, "to move your Lordship to acquaint his Majesty privately with the contents of a letter which we have been fain to commence on one of the blanks, for staying the Captain of the Guard, who would have carried most of them that would have left this place with him; from which being dissuaded now, he resolved to be gone, and hath induced a great many gentlemen to accompany him—whom only by his undertaking to do great things for them,"* . . . he persuaded, as I infer from the context, to follow him.

From London, which the rush of noblemen and gentlemen to Scotland had left almost like a deserted city, Raleigh, with his family and a number of private friends, repaired to Bath; while Lord Cobham, to ascertain the position he might hope to occupy in the new reign, proceeded to Edinburgh. As his father had been secretly a favourer of James's mother, he expected a kind reception,† being ignorant of the devices by which his brother-in-law had blasted his hopes; but meeting with the reverse, he retraced his steps in sullen discontent.‡ By undertaking this journey unknown to Raleigh, he clearly evinced an inclination to follow separate courses, though the ill success of his mission threw him back upon his old policy.

What at this time were Raleigh's expectations, or what

* The letter, a rough copy, blurred and blotted, scarcely legible throughout, becomes altogether unintelligible after the words "to do great things for them," though the sense requires some such conclusion as I have suggested. The document is endorsed, "Minutes from my Master and the Lord Kinloss to the Lord Henry Howard." Signed by Mr Somerset—April 9th. MS. State Paper Office.

† 'Court and Times of James I.,' i. 5.

‡ "Lord Cobham has returned from the King very much displeased." 'Varios Puntos de los Avisos.' Simancas.

were the designs he framed, it is now impossible to conjecture: like Burleigh* and his son Robert, he may have been inclined at one time to advance the pretensions of Arabella Stuart, though if he ever cherished such an intention, he must have speedily relinquished it when he beheld the incredible enthusiasm which a majority of the English nobles displayed in favour of James. Still, circumstances pressed upon him the necessity of adopting some measures in self-defence, since, from the tone in which he had been addressed by Cecil and Kinloss, he could not avoid perceiving that he stood in much peril. He had good reason to know how fertile in artifices the mind of the Secretary was, and with what sanguinary fervour he was always ready to sacrifice those who stood in his way. Having never been skilful in gaining friends or multiplying partisans, Raleigh now found himself so destitute of supporters that he could reckon with confidence—a confidence which soon proved baseless—on no man of high rank except Cobham. Rendered uneasy by the length of his absence, he urged his joining him and Lady Raleigh in anxious and affectionate language. "Here we attend you," he says, "and have done this fortnight, and mourn your absence the rather because we fear your mind is changed. I pray you let us hear from you at least; for if you do not, we will away sooner. My wife will despair ever to see you in these parts if you come not now—we can but long for you all our lives."†

Upon James's arrival Raleigh necessarily came to town, to attend on him in his office. Upon his first presentation the King, we are told, punning coarsely upon his name, which he knew not how to pronounce, exclaimed, "By my saul, maun, I have heard but rawly of thee!"‡ To express

* This may be clearly inferred from a letter of Charles Cavendish. Miss Costello, 'Lives of Eminent Englishwomen,' i. 209.

† Raleigh to Cobham, April 29th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

‡ Aubrey, ii. 515. The new King is showing great partiality for his

the scorn that filled Raleigh's mind at hearing himself addressed after such a fashion would transcend the power of language. He saw, however, at a glance, all the bearings of his situation, and felt that the circumstances of that situation would constrain him to suffer—

> "The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes."

Various reasons urged Cecil and the Howards to undermine Raleigh's credit with the King: first, they were apprehensive, lest, if he had obtained any knowledge of their doings during the interregnum, he might reveal it, and thus effect their ruin; second, even should he find it impracticable to accomplish so much, he might yet so far eclipse them by his transcendent abilities as to throw their fortunes into the shade. No one has ever raised the veil from what took place in the interval between Elizabeth's death and the instalment of James in London. The crown-jewels, the plate of gold and silver, the money in the Treasury, the ornaments, dresses, trinkets, and other valuables heaped up in the various palaces—all lay at the mercy of a few favoured families during six whole weeks, and it was afterwards more than suspected that the opportunity had been turned to good account. Fifteen years later, when James had been partially enlightened by experience, he sought to extort from Raleigh evidence against the favourites of his accession,* who had enriched themselves by his plunder, and been suffered in some instances to sink into the grave unpunished.

Except the flash of vulgarity displayed in Raleigh's first reception by James, no indication of the hate he cherished escaped the royal dissembler for some time. The

nation, and it is understood that he will give the principal offices to his countrymen. He has manifested displeasure towards Sir Walter Raleigh, the Treasurer, Lord Cobham, and the Chancellor, who feel very much aggrieved. 'Varios Puntos de los Avisos.' Simancas.

* Chamberlain to Carleton, Oct. 24th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

actors in the plot felt that there need be no hurry, because the prey was completely in their toils, which were not the less sure because they were invisible. Out of deference, probably, to public opinion, it was thought best to let Raleigh down gradually, as if the process were regulated, not by any previous design, but simply by occasion of circumstance. The plan may originally have been Cecil's, but, in addition to the King, several noblemen and gentlemen had long been associated in the enterprise. We have seen the assurances of Lord Kinloss to Cecil that the destruction of Cobham and Raleigh had been resolved upon by James and his Scottish advisers before the death of Elizabeth, probably even before the Secretary and Lord Henry commenced that series of calumnies the last link of which was intended to be death. Still James seems to have experienced peculiar satisfaction in practically illustrating to the few who understood him his proficiency in kingcraft, of which among all his qualities he was the proudest. He loved to play with the fish before he hooked it. Raleigh was therefore not only received at Court, but encouraged to ride out and jest with his assassin; who, as he gazed at his magnificent figure, martial bearing, and countenance beaming with intellect, chuckled inwardly at his resolution to send him sooner or later to the block.

Raleigh soon discovered, probably without much surprise, that Erskine, one of the murderers of Earl Gowrie,* was to be substituted for him as Captain of the Guard, though, by way of a set-off, the three hundred a-year he had hitherto paid Lord Henry Seymour, out of his salary as Governor of Jersey, were remitted to him.†

* Sir Henry Neville observes, in a letter to Winwood, that Earl Gowrie and his brother had been murdered in James's presence, and probably by his order. Memoirs, i. 249. He adds, in another letter, that Gowrie's brother was murdered on account of some affection between him and the Queen, which he believed to have been the real cause of the tragedy. Ibid. p. 274.

† Cecil to Windebank, May 21st, 1603. State Paper Office. Raleigh

For the time no further change appeared to be contemplated, and Raleigh was permitted to mingle undisturbed among the other courtiers, while the machinery, the working of which was to produce his ruin and death, was preparing. The general state of things, characterized by turmoil and big with change, was favourable to the purpose of his enemies: conspiracies were afoot, some originating with their ostensible authors, others with the Government, which, by proving itself to be in the secret of several designs, sought to infuse the belief into the public mind that it held in its hands the thread and fate of all. As a man of mark, generally suspected to be little in favour, Raleigh was now looked upon by most of the plotters as a desirable ally; though in some cases he was reckoned among those who were to be immured in the Tower dungeons or cut to pieces. When throwing together the elements of their conspiracies, the difficulty of finding able leaders and agents led them to determine upon offering to him the command of the fleet, when they should have wrested it from the King; or if communications were opened with foreign powers, they judged him to be a fit person to conduct their negotiations.*

In the beginning of June Count Aremberg arrived in London† as ambassador from the Cardinal Archduke, ostensibly to congratulate James on his accession, but in reality to regulate secretly the movements of those plots and conspiracies the object of which was to re-establish Catholicism in England. Aremberg, fat, gouty, and slow of speech,‡

was made Governor of Jersey on the death of Sir Anthony Paulet, August 26th, 1600, his competitors being Lord H. Seymour and Sir W. Russell, to the latter of whom he offered, if he would withdraw his claims, the Lord-lieutenancy of Cornwall and the Wardenship of the Stannaries. Russell replied haughtily, that he would take what the Queen gave him, which he soon found to be nothing; but being unable, on account of his other duties, to reside in the island, Raleigh made Kemys his lieutenant, with a salary of a hundred marks a year. Kemys to Cecil from the Tower, August 15th, 1603. Add. MSS. 6177, f. 261. B. M.

* Compare Watson's Examinations, and Copley's Confessions. MSS. State Paper Office.

† State Trials, ii. 3.

‡ Lodge, iii. 10.

became at once an object of ridicule to James and his courtiers, who had yet to learn that under that unpromising exterior lurked one of the most subtle spirits in Europe. His instructions were drawn up conjointly by the Cardinal Archduke and his wife, who received from him and transmitted to Philip and Lerma at Madrid minute accounts of whatever was going on in England. The consequences of Elizabeth's death, says the Infanta, are likely to prove as prolific of mischief as any of the actions of her life. The blood of Mary Stuart still cries for vengeance before the Lord, yet the conversion of her son is to be hoped for, since his wife is undoubtedly a Catholic, together with many of his ministers.*

James, however, who while doubtful of his future in Scotland had coquetted with the Catholics, now that he had won the prize discarded them with contempt. He perceived but too clearly, from the temper of the English people, that any attempt to interfere with the religion of the country would cost him his crown, if not his life; and this conviction had begun to dawn upon his mind before he left Scotland, which we learn from the narrative of a priest, who having borrowed ten pounds and a nag from a wealthy member of his sect, posted away immediately after Elizabeth's death to bear the joyful tidings to the King. Having, however, been forestalled by Carey, Ferrer, and many others, he found but a cold greeting at Edinburgh; and James, alluding to his offer of services as the delegate of his co-religionists, exclaimed contemptuously, as soon as his back was turned, "Na, na, gude faith, we hae na need of the Papists noo."†

* "Su Mujer es sin dudo Catolica." Cartas Originales del Cardinal Alberto y su mujer desde 1598 hasta 1610. The letter in which the above phrase occurs is dated Brussels, April 16th, 1603. Biblioteca Nacional. Aremberg's own letters, together with those of the Duke and Infanta to Philip, are preserved in the Archives of Simancas.

† Your worship must anticipate every day worse tidings of the new King, because he is a heretic, every inch of him; and the Catholics who expect anything from him are deceived. He has said to several persons

But the agents of Catholicism were not simple enough to lull themselves into the belief that Protestantism could be extirpated from the hearts and hearths of England by a few maudlin priests with their puerile conspiracies. Thoroughly to do the work of Rome and the Escorial, Aremberg and his master knew that large sums of money would be needed, for which, therefore, they earnestly pressed Philip and the Duke of Lerma.* With the golden lever in his hand, the sanguine Count scarcely doubted of success. In all ranks of English society partisans of the old religion were still found, whose mental calibre rendered them capable of believing that when they knelt before a priest they were kneeling to God. Confessors and Absolution-mongers accordingly swarmed throughout the country, supported by devotees, male and female, whose imaginations were fired by the hope of enveloping their country once more in the darkness of the middle ages. Then, as now, the decrees of Trent were adopted as a rule of belief by thousands, some of whom contentedly wore the livery of Rome, while others, more crafty, took refuge within the pale of the English Church, which they polluted with their dogmas and their ritualism.

In war, great commanders have always reckoned it a gain to be delivered from the base and faint-hearted, though they should swell the ranks of the enemy. It is the same in churches militant. No real loss is sustained by the desertion of the frail and ignorant, whose aim in life may be better answered by herding with monks and unmarried priests, than with upright clergymen, the fathers of families, respecting the sanctities of the domestic hearth, and by sharing the common joys and afflictions of humanity, better

that he does not regard those as his friends who will not go with him to his church. 'Varios Puntos de los Avisos que dio el Padre Cresuelo.' Simancas.

* Cartas Originales del Cardinal Alberto y su Mujer. Madrid y Simancas.

understanding how to rejoice with those who rejoice, and to sorrow with those who mourn.

But this reflection by no means suggested itself to Aremberg or his employers. In their view the conversion of nations could be best brought about by introducing the leaven at the summit of society, whence they doubted not it would work downwards. Christianity at the outset did not so work; it began with the poor, and threw its light upwards, dazzling principalities and powers, till they substituted Christ for Jupiter. It operated after much the same fashion in England, though not with exactly the same ultimate result; for Puritanism began with the people, rose into the middle ranks, passed upwards into the nobility, and then for a time compassed those who walked along the giddiest heights of power. There, however, the parallel ceases, for superstition in those airy regions soon supplanted religion, and being more reconcilable with royal modes of life, long continued to govern the consciences of our kings.

At the period of which I am speaking, conversion was only a means to an end: confession, absolution, celibacy of the clergy, monasticism, Jesuitism, chasubles, pixes, and wafers, were regarded only as a ladder over which some fortunate Papist might mount the throne. Towards that point all the plots now in agitation tended. The first and most formidable was that of the Jesuits,* to be developed by infantry, cavalry, and great guns; to command which a sum equal to five millions sterling was in the course of being raised by the Catholics: the second was that of the priests,† the offspring of imbecility, which was to realize its object by seizing and killing the King—for it aimed at nothing

* The Catholics have been ready ever since March in the hope of succour from Spain: but have been prevented from making large preparations by the necessity of keeping the secret among a few. They have however in readiness 3000 horses, and might command all the horses in the kingdom if they had money or jewels wherewith to purchase them. Relacion de Antonio Dutton. Simancas.

† 'Watson's Examination,' August 23rd, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

less.* There was a third plot, partly Puritanical, partly Catholic, which meant to take James captive, and extort from him complete toleration.

In the midst of these projects there was another, of which we shall probably never know the nature, though the object, no doubt, was a change of sovereigns. This, laid in the Escorial, and sat upon at Rome and Brussels, was to be hatched in London by Aremberg, with the aid of such other persons as he could purchase. It was in this mysterious transaction that Cobham and Raleigh were suspected of being engaged. Aremberg, on his arrival in London, took up his residence like other noblemen in a palace overlooking the river, with which, by a flight of stairs, it communicated. Both Raleigh and Lord Cobham resided in mansions similarly situated; communication, therefore, by water, and in the dark, was always practicable, and Cobham, we are told, in pursuance of some design the nature of which is still unknown, repaired secretly in a wherry to the Count's dwelling at two o'clock in the morning.† In those long days of June, light was already dawning over the Thames at that hour, so that his boat was visible as it glided along the shore, passing one flight of stairs after another. On some occasions he supped with Raleigh, and afterwards proceeded on his midnight visits.

We are now touching the end of the chain which connects Raleigh with the Bloody Tower, with his second Guiana voyage, and with the block in Palace Yard; yet it is not needful to linger very long over the circumstances of that dark and disastrous period. Every writer who has touched upon the subject confesses what is absurdly called "The Raleigh Plot" to be an enigma, the

* The slightest resistance that might be made to the King of Scotland would place him in a dilemma, since he would not know who to trust, and would think he was betrayed, and fly to Scotland if he could, because he would find no safety on this side Berwick. Relacion de Antonio Dutton, 18 de Mayo, 1603. Simancas.

† 'Cobham's Examination,' July 19th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

Œdipus of which has not yet been born. With the explosion of the other political machines, Raleigh's reputation is in truth no way connected; the priests' treason certainly glances at him more than once, but by no means in a way to compromise his character; and had it been otherwise, Cecil's connection with that atrocious scheme would in any case suffice to explain his apparent complicity. Some years previous, Anthony Copley, a Papist living in exile, of which he had grown weary, made an offer of his services to Cecil.* Respecting the nature of those services it was not likely that he meant to be particular, since he spoke of them in the lump with a tone of debonnair rascality, indicating entire recklessness. Far-sighted as he was, it is yet possible that the crafty Secretary could not at once foresee how Copley might prove useful; yet he laid by his communication, so that he might know where to find him should his treachery be wanted. The time had now come. Copley was ordered up to town, and instructed to insinuate himself into the confidence of the disaffected among his co-religionists, learn the whole bearing of their designs, and then give the Government an equivalent for its permission to return to England. It would be heaping upon Cecil superfluous charges of guilt to make him the fabricator of the Watson and Clarke plot; the credit of that wretched contrivance may be fairly left to those poor priests, and their friends, Brooke and Markham. But learning what was in agitation, Cecil had very soon his representatives among the conspirators, for with Copley, Brooksby, Gifford, and Barneby were at once associated.†

Though Cecil extracted out of this conspiracy a pretext for effecting the destruction of his old friend, it was only by the exercise of that subtle dexterity for which he was known and dreaded by his contemporaries. The real gist of the

* Copley's 'Sketch of his own Life.' Lansdowne MSS.

† Kinloss to Gifford and Barneby, Aug. 11th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

suspicions against Raleigh had reference to Spain. To affect surprise at the discontent he cherished would be puerile, he could be no other than discontented at finding himself besprinkled with the fetid foam which the mere force of accident had placed above him; but that he never intrigued with Rome or Spain seems all but certain. It would be going too far to affirm that, in the immense mass of documents preserved at Simancas and Madrid, no proofs of such intrigues will ever be found; but if they exist, they not only escaped my own researches, but those of the ablest antiquaries now in Spain, who declare emphatically that the result of their investigations was, that Guaterale, as they call him, was one of the most detested enemies their country ever had. They term him buccaneer, corsair, pirate, heretic, but never mingle with their abjurgations the slightest intimation that he had at any time been friendly to their king or government. There is a series of original letters, in the highest degree private and confidential, extending over twelve years, and embracing the whole of this period, from the Cardinal Archduke and his wife to King Philip and the Duke of Lerma, in which I fail to discern even an allusion to Raleigh, though the letters in many cases are based on the reports of Aremberg; yet it is not to be denied that Lord Cobham was engaged in mysterious relations with the Count, that he was Raleigh's most intimate friend, and that he did reveal to him from time to time some of the wild schemes that flitted over his imbecile brain.

CHAPTER II.

ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT.

The power to read the future belongs to few. Neither Puritans, Catholics, nor Established Churchmen possessed it at the opening of the seventeenth century, though they all sought to impress the character of their respective parties upon the times. Lord Grey of Wilton, the son of him who ordered the slaughter at del Oro, now dreamed of reviving the practice of the old barons, who used to present in arms their petitions to the sovereign. But he lived too late or too soon; the days of chivalry were past, and the days of the Long Parliament were yet to come. The Jesuits, by locating their scheme in England, committed a geographical blunder, and the priests, with their project for seizing the king at Greenwich or Hanworth, killing him, or imprisoning him, and extorting from his fears predominance for their religion, were guilty of an anachronism. They shut their eyes to the mental changes which Protestantism had effected in England —to the revolution brought about in philosophy—to the rapid spread of classical studies, which were silently moulding the generals and statesmen of the commonwealth—above all, to the influence of the Bible, which, pouring in upon fervid and impassioned minds, was generating that fierce system of theology which incited men at no distant day to abjure the name of Bishop and King, and to talk of the "Parliament of Heaven."

Events now flashed upon the world which were to present Raleigh to the public in a new light. The conspiracies

in progress having been permitted by Cecil to develop themselves so far as to compromise the safety of their originators, a broad light was suddenly let in upon their secret movements, which startled their conductors into frenzy. Up to the moment of discovery, the conspirators were accustomed to meet at each other's lodgings, at the Temple, in the Strand, or in Westminster, where they occasionally sought to cool their heated brains by walking at night amid the cloisters of the Abbey. Copley appears to have stipulated that he should be thought to give his evidence on compulsion, or in the hope of saving his own life;* Brooksby, Barneby, and Gifford were less squeamish, and earned and took the wages of treachery with slight regard to appearances.

Though Cecil was from the beginning acquainted with the mechanism and working of the plot, he thought it for the credit of the Government that a discovery should seem to be made accidentally, and at a critical moment; his agents, therefore, came forward with their disclosures just in time to persuade James that his life had been saved by Cecil's sagacity, which he now learned to regard as a better defence against Catholic stilettoes than his padded doublet or systematic seclusion. As soon as news of the discovery reached the conspirators, the terror that seized upon them exceeded all bounds. They immediately dispersed, and concealed themselves, some in town, others in the country;† while proclamations were issued and despatched to the seaports, describing their persons with ludicrous minuteness, and peremptorily commanding all persons in authority to take measures for their apprehension.‡

* Proclamation for the apprehension of Copley, July 2nd, 1603. State Paper Office. Bancroft to Cecil, July 12th. Declaration of Copley, July 14th. Coke informs us that Bancroft was a stout foot-ball player, and an advocate of those political principles which brought James into general odium, and his son to the block, p. 60.

† "Stepped afield" is the phrase of Sir William Waade.

‡ Bancroft to Sheriff of Nottingham, July 14th, 1603. State Paper Office.

But how came the meshes of this wretched scheme to envelop Raleigh? No student of history will, I think, be able to adduce a parallel case. The course of reasoning by which suspicion was made to touch him, manifestly implies in the mind of Cecil a foregone conclusion. He had, in fact, for some years determined upon Raleigh's overthrow, if not upon his death. James, also, with Kinloss and Mar, had decreed that Raleigh and Cobham should be forlorn as soon as an opportunity presented itself, and for this they had all along been eagerly on the look-out. Never did Red Indian dip his arrows in a venom so deadly as that which tinged the barbed calumnies of Cecil and Lord Henry Howard. King, favourites, ministers, being united in hatred, and aiming their shafts at the same breast, it would indeed have been strange had success not been achieved.

Throwing aside for the present what concerned the priests and their accomplices, let us follow the chain of incidents which led Raleigh to the Bloody Tower. Among the worst of the plotters was Cecil's brother-in-law, George Brooke,* a man deformed like himself in body, and still more deformed in mind. He had been driven into the ranks of the disaffected by an act of injustice on the part of James, who had bestowed on another a lucrative appointment of which Elizabeth had given Brooke the reversion. His habits being dissolute, his means were always unequal to his wants, so that he was ready to avail himself of the slightest chance of bettering his condition; and in the distribution of places, to be made after the contemplated revolution, no lower position had been assigned to him than that of Lord-marshal of England.†

While George was revelling in these dreams, the bubble burst, and he had to conceal himself. There is no hatred like the hatred of brothers: George hated his brother Lord

* Cf. Sir T. Edmonds to Cecil, July 13th. Answers and assertions of G. Brooke, July 17th. His Confession, July 19th. State Paper Office.

† Watson's 'Examination.'

Cobham, and Cecil, their brother-in-law, hated them both. They were accordingly arrested, and their family enemy prepared deliberately for vengeance. George, with his lame leg, took refuge in the house of his mother-in-law, Lady Burgh; Lord Cobham was arrested at Sheen. These things, however, were not done in an hour; Raleigh, with the rest of the world, heard of them one after another; he read the proclamations that were issued against the conspirators; he understood all the measures to which recourse was had for capturing and bringing them to justice; and he could not be ignorant of the animus with which the King, his courtiers, and ministers, would set about the business of making a thorough clearance of their enemies. Yet, with the confidence inspired by innocence, instead of attempting flight or concealment, he remained at Court among those who rode out with the King for exercise or to the chase.

But Cecil had laid his plans, and proceeded leisurely to carry them out. Brooke and Cobham had been examined, and in the midst of their contradictory disclosures and confessions, Cecil detected some phrases which he thought might be made to criminate Raleigh. His platform of inference, as he himself explained it, was this: if George Brooke was guilty, his brother, Lord Cobham, could hardly be innocent; and if he were not innocent, how could Raleigh, who was his most intimate friend, be expected to stand in that category?* The exquisite logic of this process can hardly fail to excite admiration; upon the strength of it, however, Cecil determined to act. Walking to and fro on the great terrace at Windsor, now looking down on Eton's spires, antique towers, and fields so often loved in vain, and now at the walls and windows of the castle, he rapidly sketched the chart of Raleigh's destruction. While he was thus ruminating, his victim came forth from the castle, booted and spurred, in gorgeous cloak, with hunting-cap and feather, to ride abroad with the King. The two men,

* State Trials, ii. 13.

who had formerly been friends, met, the one with jovial unconcern, the other filled with deadly animosity, which could not fail to blanch his cheek and influence the inflections of his voice. He looked at the tall proud soldier, who had compassed land and deep in search of fame, and doubtless experienced that inward satisfaction which bad men feel when they are about to achieve a triumph over virtue. Addressing Raleigh, he said he must crave his company to the Council-chamber, where the lords were then sitting in deliberation. In that chamber, about twenty-six feet square, and very lofty, no lords now assemble to take counsel on any subject; it is appropriated to domestic uses, and there artists often sit when they take portraits of Queen Victoria, or any member of her family.

Instead, however, of palettes and easels, of sitters and artists, the apartment on that July morning was filled with statesmen, through whom a thrill of peculiar feeling passed when they beheld Raleigh enter with Cecil. On the proceedings of the hour a curtain is dropped for ever; but whatever they may have been, they resulted in the commitment of Raleigh first to his own house, and afterwards to the Tower. The meaning of Kinloss's phrase, "Cobham and Raleigh are forlorn in our account," was thus made clear, though it afterwards received still further elucidation. We have now accompanied Raleigh to the place which, with one short interval of absence, constituted his home for nearly thirteen years. Cecil therefore had him safe, to insult by formal examinations, by insolent interrogatories, by malignant suggestions, by holding up alternately before his mind prospects coloured by hope and fear; while day after day, and hour after hour, the Tower opened its ponderous jaws to take in new victims — Grey, Cobham, Brooke, Parham, Copley, Watson, Clarke, Gifford, Brooksby, Barneby, and others, some designed for the scaffold, others to aid in conducting them to it.

Through the examinations that followed of the plotters

of various classes, nothing worthy the name of evidence was obtained against Raleigh; but Cobham being thrown by a dishonourable artifice into a fit of passion which overcame his reason, was at length betrayed into extravagant accusations. A portion of a letter was shown him from Raleigh to Cecil, which, apart from the context, read like a disclosure of Cobham's guilt, upon which he fell into the trap laid for him.* In the frame of mind thus produced, the two friends now lay, one in the Bloody, the other in the Wardrobe Tower. Raleigh, who had begun to comprehend the scheme of his enemies, felt the full importance of undeceiving Cobham, and obtained from him a retractation of his falsehoods; but how were his explanations to be communicated? The medium that presented itself could hardly have been looked for. Sir John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower, was a solicitor for Raleigh's post of Governor of Jersey,† which would become vacant by his attainder or death; he was therefore deeply interested in accumulating evidence of his guilt. But he had a son knighted and enriched by James,‡ yet nevertheless willing to risk everything by affording Raleigh the aid he needed to establish his innocence. For this purpose he voluntarily became the intermediary between Raleigh and Cobham, ministering to them what comfort he could, and conveying messages from one to the other. The business was perilous, as he afterwards learned to his cost; but with the high chivalry of youth, he despised the danger and persisted in his kind offices.

While matters were in this state an event occurred, or was said to have occurred, which will be admitted to be mysterious. At dinner one day, with many other guests at the Lieutenant's table, Raleigh, we are told, seized a knife and attempted to plunge it into his heart. The arm of the

* Oldys, 'Life of Raleigh,' p. 373.

† Peyton to Cecil, July 30th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

‡ Grant to him of six manors in Herefordshire, Aug. 18th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

captive had not yet been weakened by paralysis; he was, on the contrary, in full strength, yet when the point of the knife struck against one of his ribs, and turned after inflicting a slight wound,* he threw it aside, and "there an end." Is this story true? and if so, how much of it, and in what sense is it true? Men, not unworthy to be classed with Raleigh, have committed suicide without quenching the light of their fame—Brutus, Cato, Pætus, and many other Romans. If Raleigh was really ambitious to follow their example, I see no reason why his biographers should desire to screen him from the censure which such an act may be thought to merit. He stood by and looked on while his great mistress killed herself by voluntary abstinence, if not by a knife. Why should he shrink from what she had done? But the question is not respecting the character of the action, but the fact. A letter has been handed down to us, purporting to have been written by Raleigh to his wife *after* his attempt at suicide; † on the very day which witnessed the crime, another letter was written by the man who had wiped Raleigh's shoes with his cloak,‡ and who, nevertheless, as we are assured by one of his nearest kin,§ was as eager to blow up Durham House with Raleigh in it as he had been to blow up Essex House. This man, I say, who thirteen years before had made James one of the persons of his infernal trinity, was now one of his most obsequious retainers. Papist as he was, he consented to become the medium of James's loathsome cant about good preachers, and that in language which reveals how keenly he sympathized with Raleigh's assassins. I give the document entire, as it may help the reader to estimate the Earl of Nottingham at his proper value.

"The king hath perused the letter your Lordship hath

* Cecil to Sir J. Parry.

† Goodman, 'History of his own Times.' Edited by Mr Brewer, ii. 93.

‡ Aubrey, 'Lives of Eminent Men,' ii. 511.

§ Lord Henry Howard. 'Secret Correspondence,' p. 133.

sent to me, and thanks you for your advertisement of your day's work, and doth desire very much that Raleigh may be now well examined, and that at the examination you would have some good preacher with you, that you may make him know that it is his soul that he must wound and not his body. The King's Majesty doth assure himself that as you have so wisely and well begun with Markham, so you will find out the bottom of this great wit's sore."*

In the forged letter published by Mr Brewer, Raleigh is made to write as if he expected death from his wound; but three days after its supposed infliction, Peyton assured Cecil that it would be perfectly whole in a day or two.

Eighteen years earlier, a state prisoner, higher in the social scale than Raleigh, had been despatched in the Tower by what at the time was denominated suicide. Had the intention to imitate that transaction dawned upon the minds of James and Cecil? If so, was not the story of the dinner-table trumped up as a prelude to what they meant should follow? Let this be another historical enigma to set beside that of The Raleigh Plot. Could the audacious fiction have been invested with anything like probability, would not Coke and Heale, and the other legal hirelings at Winchester, have gloated over it, and revelled in insults to their illustrious victim? And would not Sir Thomas Wilson, fifteen years later, together with Naunton and James himself, have been too happy to cast the obloquy of it in his teeth, when, if we may believe the witness who relates it, Raleigh did descant upon suicide as a Roman virtue? The last effort made by the English Government to give a wide currency to the report was the imparting of it to the Venetian Ambassador; who, receiving a relation from such a source, could do no less than forward an account of it, in language implying no scepticism, to his most cautious and scrutinizing masters, the seignory of Venice.

* Nottingham to Cecil. Palace, 11 at night, July 27th, 1603. MS. British Museum.

In the beginning of August, Peyton ceased to be Lieutenant of the Tower, and was succeeded by Sir George Harvey;* by whose appointment a marked change was effected in Raleigh's condition. Nothing further was heard of his melancholy. He rose early, combed his long hair like a Spartan, read or wrote for a few hours, and then went forth into the grounds to play at bowls, and drink beer with Harvey and his officers. In the evening he generally supped at the Lieutenant's table.† At other times, however, when Cecil felt inclined to enjoy the luxury of triumph, Raleigh's days were passed differently: he had then to answer malignant questions, and to undergo the probings of Scottish divines, probably on the subjects of demonology, witchcraft, and tobacco.

Every day's examination must have convinced Raleigh that it behoved him to make careful preparation for his coming trial, at which nothing less would be aimed at than his life. The aspect of the times was as dark as his own prospects. Throughout London,‡ the Plague, with capricious footsteps, was scattering death among high and low,—now retreating to the farthest suburbs,—now coming back and knocking with skeleton fingers at the very gates of the Tower.

In those parts of the East where the Plague is a frequent visitor, its movements are regulated no one knows how. Commonly it seems to follow the track of the caravans, which bear with them therefore to great cities riches and death. Sometimes it travels in a mysterious way, over desert tracts, and little-frequented roads. A stranger arrives perhaps in the evening at a Karavanserai; he looks ill, is scarcely able to attend to his beast, he does not eat, his turban falls down over his forehead, his clothes hang loosely

* King to Sir George Harvey, July 30th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

† Examination of Edward Cotterel, February 4th, 1607. MS. State Paper Office.

‡ The Plague of 1603 destroyed 30,578 persons. Lodge, iii. 14.

about him, some disease has evidently shrivelled him up: he is dead before the morning, and his body is covered with livid spots. There is no mistake—he has died of the Plague. In the course of a few hours other deaths occur in the Karavanserai: the bodies are carried forth to interment; the clothes of the deceased are sold in the bazaar,—the contagion spreads, and scarcely a fortnight has elapsed before several thousands of the population have retreated to the narrow house. To this the belief in fate reconciles the survivors—it was written—God has called them to himself, and it is best so. No precautions are taken, the infection works its will, and the growth of population is thus kept within the limits of subsistence.

In England no belief in fatality interfered with the conduct of the authorities, or with the feelings of the people; yet through ignorance or negligence acts were perpetrated within the bills of mortality scarcely less censurable than the Eastern practice of selling the infected garments of the dead; for in Hampstead, Highgate, and the other villages around London, the old beds, mattresses, and straw of the beds of those that died of the sickness were thrown out into the highways, so that none could approach the capital without passing through the accumulated elements of infection.*

Throughout the metropolis the incessant tolling of the death-knell caused a rapid displacement of population, since all who possessed means fled into the country. All practicable precautions were taken to hinder the pestilence from making its way into the Tower, and snatching his business from the executioner. Yet the terror within the walls was great; one of the warders who had a house in St Catherine's died there; another who lived near the Iron Gate in the farthest part of the fortress fell sick; alarmed therefore at the grim approach of danger, Harvey sent away his wife and children, though he determined to ride out the storm himself. Waade, intrusted, under the Lieutenant, with the

* Waade to Cecil, August 27th, 1603. State Paper Office.

special charge of the state prisoners, possessing less courage, took to flight, and tremblingly watched the spread of the contagion from his Hampstead villa. The courtiers, to whose lot fell the task of examining the prisoners, intermitted their visits to the Tower, so that all needful intercourse between them and their captive had to be carried on by fumigated letters. "Sir Walter Raleigh hath much importuned me," says Harvey, "to send these unto your Lordship, the contents whereof requiring no extraordinary haste, I am bold to commend them unto your Lordship by this bearer, Mr Mellersh, wherewith (because many services belong to this place) I have thought it my duty to certify your Lordship, that, touching the sickness, the Tower standeth almost as it did at your last being here, until within these four days that one of the warders dwelling near unto the Iron Gate, the remotest place in all the Tower, fell sick, and so yet remaineth, as it is suspected of the Plague. One other of the warders sickened at a house which he had in St Catherine's, and there died; but within the Tower, no contagion hitherto—praised be God—is entered, though in reason it may be feared. In the mean time I will use my best endeavour to keep it out."*

From this passage we make the discovery that something like a kindly feeling between Raleigh and his former friend had been re-established, for Mellersh was Cobham's steward, and conducted his most private business, both before and after his imprisonment.

* Harvey to Cecil, Sept. 7th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER III.

TRIAL AT WINCHESTER.

An astrologer would now have said that the stars in their courses fought against Raleigh.* Grown weary of prosecuting hostilities with England, and jealous of the ascendancy of France at James's court, Spain took decisive steps towards bringing about a peace; Juan de Taxis, Conde de Villa Mediana, with a suitable following, large sums of money, and a profuse assortment of presents, was in the month of August sent to England to co-operate with Count Aremberg.† James, in mortal dread of the Plague, was flitting hither and thither through his dominions, now resting for a while at Oxford, now at Windsor, Wilton, or Winchester, accompanied by the crafty and obsequious ministers of France and Germany. Henri IV., to humour James's extravagances, had accredited to him gentlemen who could at least affect a passion for the chase, which insured them opportunities of being frequently about his person.‡

When Taxis arrived James was at Oxford, to which city therefore the ambassador repaired, in the hope of a speedy audience. Having come, however, from the country in

* Yet at this time Sir Thomas Edmondes remarked that it was expected all the prisoners except Raleigh would be found guilty, for that in his case positive proofs were wanting. Lodge, iii. 29.

† Lewkenor to the Council, Aug. 2nd, 1603. State Paper Office.

‡ The celebrated Duc de Sully was at the head of this embassy. Cobham to the King, April 29th, 1603. State Paper Office.

which delays flourish most luxuriantly, he ought surely to have expected to meet with some few specimens of the same plants in England. Whatever may have been his anticipations, he certainly found them. The French put in play all their talent for intrigue to keep him from Court, and were lucky enough to find a powerful auxiliary; for the Plague breaking out in Taxis's suite, furnished James with a fair pretext for postponing an audience. Still civilities and promises were lavished profusely upon the ambassador, who made friends among the venal courtiers, male and female, by distributing without stint the perfumed gloves,* laces, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, and other jewels, with which his master Philip had intrusted him; yet no progress was made towards settling the business on which he came. Instead of being admitted to James's presence to see him gorge, thrust his hand into the dish while the seneschal was carving, or drink himself into a state of stupid intoxication with Greek wine,† Taxis was sent to Southampton, which Lewkenor, master of the ceremonies, affirmed to be the sweetest town in the kingdom. Having an eye to possible contingencies, the Spaniard wished to survey the ports and landing-places on the Hampshire coast and the Isle of Wight, but was put off with various excuses. To amuse his long interval of inaction, the master-of-the-ceremonies had recourse to sundry devices, sometimes amusing him with banquets, dancing, and music; sometimes with bull-baiting, which, reminding him of the amusement he had enjoyed at home in the Plazas de Toros, delighted him extremely.‡

* Lodge, iii. 25.

† Raumer, ii. 200. Roger Coke informs us that James had no taste for ordinary French and Spanish wines, but took to the wines of Greece on account of their superior strength. He adds that his own father, hunting when quite a young man with James, took a draught from his cup, which not only disordered him for the time, but left behind it a three days' headache, p. 78.

‡ Lewkenor to Cecil, August 23rd, and September 21st, 1603. State Paper Office.

While the diplomatic agent of Raleigh's most persevering and most powerful enemy was slowly but surely making way towards bringing about a pacification between that personage and James, the attention of the English public was divided between the Plague and the preparations going on for the trial of the conspirators. Much that then took place has been suffered to pass into oblivion; the rack and the Scavenger's Daughter were actively employed to extort confessions from inferior prisoners, and once, we are told, the former instrument was significantly shown to Captain Kemys* by Northampton's or Cecil's order, in the hope of subduing the fidelity of that gallant companion of Raleigh's adventures in America. But Kemys was a man of Roman mould, whom neither the fear of torture nor its application could have subdued. It was wholly different with Cobham, his brother George, the priests, and their associates. These —cruel, cowardly, and effeminate—were ready to confess anything, and to accuse any one and every one, if they could only by so doing escape death. Not a plotter among them all, however, save Cobham, could even be supposed capable of giving the slightest evidence that could touch Raleigh. It was accordingly towards him that the attention of the Government was almost exclusively directed. No stage hero, no Claudio, no Hamlet ever conceived a greater horror at the prospect of being thrust into that undiscovered country "from whose bourne no traveller returns" than the wretched Cobham, whose soul sickened at the bare idea that, for indulging a few vain and frivolous hopes, he might soon be sentenced "To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot."

How far his weakness was purposely assaulted by such suggestions I know not, but it is certain that his worthless wife, with her whole kith and kin, desired that he should make a scapegoat of Raleigh.† Many a Roman slave has left in the records of history evidences of greatness of soul

* State Trials, ii. 22.

† Lady Kildare to Cobham, October 29th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

transcending even the conception of this English nobleman, who to prolong his miserable existence paltered, equivocated, confessed, denied, swore and forswore himself, till he excited the scorn and loathing of his very tormentors.

Not being able to foresee what course would be pursued by his enemies, Raleigh took all practicable steps for his defence. He had always been a diligent student, and possessing a searching and subtle mind, now applied himself to the reading of law, of history, Scripture, and divinity, that he might be qualified on all points to deal with his assailants.

Lady Raleigh meantime laboured to have his cause removed from the ordinary courts to the Star Chamber,* a privilege for which she offered in vain the sum of five thousand pounds. Owing to the pestilence, it soon became evident that the trials could not take place in London, and various places in the country were, one after another, mentioned; but at length in the course of October the old city of Winchester was fixed upon. On the 26th the Lieutenant of the Tower received orders to provide carriages, carts, and waggons for the conveyance of the prisoners, who with their servants and effects were to be conducted to their place of destination by an escort of fifty horse.†

Raleigh saw that the crisis of his fate was drawing near, while he remained wholly ignorant of the course which the only witness against him meant to pursue. Cobham had been tricked into a false accusation: had he retracted, or would he retract? In spite of the kindness of young Peyton and of Sir George Harvey himself, who often dined and supped with him in his apartment when all servants were excluded, Raleigh had failed to ascertain Cobham's intentions. After long and frequently racking his brain, he at length hit upon a device for conveying a solemn appeal to Cobham's con-

* Sir Allan Percy to Carleton, Oct. 31st, 1603. State Paper Office.
† Letter to Sheriff of Middlesex, Oct. 26th, 1603. State Paper Office.

science, which he hoped might awaken him to a due sense of the awful injustice and wickedness of his conduct.

In Raleigh's service there was a man named Cotterel, bold, ingenious, and for the time devoted to his master's interest; upon his shrewdness and fidelity he determined therefore to rely, as they offered the last chance of success in his design. November had set in with its fogs, its rains, its dark chill nights; an intimation was conveyed to the inmate of the Wardrobe Tower to leave open his window on such an evening. Raleigh wrote a letter full, we may be sure, of touching appeals, urging his old friend to retract his injurious accusations and state the truth. Cotterel was then called into Raleigh's chamber, and the all-important letter, twisted, and tied carefully about an apple, placed in his hands. It was about eight o'clock, an hour at which the old fortress was then still and silent. Cotterel emerged from the Bloody Tower, and gliding noiselessly through a labyrinth of narrow passages, which one who knew them well properly termed oblivious, drew near Cobham's prison. He looked up; a light was burning in the captive's chamber; the window was open. He took careful aim and threw the apple, which alighted at Cobham's feet. Then slinking back into some dark corner, he waited anxiously for that which he believed would convey the assurance of life or death to his master. For awhile the light continued to burn brightly in Cobham's apartment; but when at length it disappeared, Cotterel advanced stealthily to the foot of the Wardrobe Tower and beheld a letter pushed forth under the door: snatching it up, he returned cautiously and silently to Raleigh.* The letter thus obtained ran as follows:—

"Seeing myself so near my end, for the discharge of my own conscience, and freeing myself from your blood, which else will cry vengeance against me, I protest upon my salvation I never practised with Spain by your procurement;

* Cotterel's 'Examination,' February 4th, 1607. MS. State Paper Office.

God so comfort me in this my affliction as you are a true subject for anything that I know, I will say as Daniel *purus sum a sanguine hujus.* So God have mercy upon my soul as I know no treason by you."*

On the 5th of November, a day afterwards made remarkable for a real plot, the old Tower became a scene of bustle and excitement; carts and waggons drove in, to be laden with the effects of the prisoners; a multitude of servants and of attendants assembled in the courts, or passed to and from the apartments of their masters; the officials of the fortress were likewise in busy motion, while the cavalry who were to guard the prisoners on the road pranced hither and thither in the outer yard. Early in the morning Raleigh's carriage drove up to the entrance of the Bloody Tower, and descending from his chamber with his usual defiant air, he passed through the ranks of spectators and enemies, and stepped into it with Sir Robert Mansfield, while Lord Grey of Wilton and Lord Cobham † were accompanied by Sir George Harvey, Brooke by Sir William Waade, and Markham by Sir Robert Wrothe.†

In the past circumstances of this narrative the reader must seek the explanation of what follows. Sir Walter Raleigh, it will have been seen, had never up to that time been popular; his manner and bearing excited in his associates a feeling akin to fear; the false rumours circulated by the Government had now caused him to be regarded as an enemy to his country; his notorious hostility to Essex, whom the vulgar still looked upon as a martyr, kindled the hatred of many; but why on the morning in question the mob should have been so exasperated against him as, in

* He reaffirms the same thing in his letter to the Council of October 30th, 1603. Speaking of his communications with Aremberg, he says they had entirely ceased, and hopes for mercy. "My offence," he says, "being but a conceit acquainting nobody with it." MS. State Paper Office. To the same purpose is the whole of his letter to the King of the same date.

† Sir Thomas Vavasour was ordered to attend Cobham and Sir Richard Leveson Grey, but a different arrangement appears to have been followed.

‡ Tichbourne to Cecil, Nov. 13th, 1603. State Paper Office.

defiance of their fear of plague, to make a rush at his carriage with the design of tearing him to pieces, seems all but inexplicable. The officers charged with his safe conduct harangued the rabble, conjuring them to let the King's prisoner pass in safety, but were for a while under strong apprehension that neither entreaties nor the swords of the cavalry would avail. Not being able to give vent to their fury in any other way, the populace threw at Raleigh's carriage tobacco-pipes, mud, brickbats, and stones, while he rode along with an air of contemptuous indifference, which augmented their indignation.*

At length the suburbs of London were passed, and the cavalcade entered upon the miry roads, through which for days they were to plunge on towards Winchester. In every town through which they passed the demonstrations of hatred towards Raleigh were renewed by the scum of the people; and there were others belonging to the higher order of society who proclaimed their readiness to travel a hundred miles to see him hanged. Less than an hour and a half would now have conveyed the prisoners by express from London to their place of trial; the journey then took them nearly seven days, for it was not until late on the evening of the 12th that the last carriage, in which were Cobham and Grey, drove into the yard of Winchester Castle.

The differences, however, in the speed and mode of travelling of that period and ours were much less than the differences in moral feeling. The sight of a great man borne even justly towards his doom would in these days, instead of curses and execrations, excite in the populace the keenest feelings of sympathy and commiseration.

A remark made by Tichbourne, governor of Winchester Castle, afterwards knighted by James, shows that the descendants of the old Saxon Gewissy were not often called on to tenant their state-prison; the accommodation supplied

* Michael Hicks to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Lodge, iii. 74. Waade to Cecil, Nov. 13th, 1603. State Paper Office.

by the castle was, he says, so scanty that much difficulty was experienced in stowing away the captives, with their keepers and servants. On Cobham's arrival an incident occurred, characteristic of both jailer and prisoner: traitors being of course suspected of cramming treason into their trunks, it was one of the duties of a good Cerberus to hunt out the perilous stuff. No amount of experience sufficed to teach Cobham wisdom. When his coffers were brought up to the apartment where he stood talking with Tichbourne, the certainty he might have felt that his eyes were watched could not preserve him from casting a look of intelligence at the servants who had been with him in the Tower. That look was a revelation to Tichbourne. The prisoner's trunks, coffers, boxes, were immediately ordered to be opened, and in one of them was discovered a letter, which the governor seized and forwarded to Lord Cecil. Was not that the letter from Raleigh which had been thrown in at the window of the Wardrobe Tower? *

By some of Raleigh's superior attendants the man who had been employed to perform that delicate service was supplied with money and sent to Sherbourne, where he remained for years in the service of Raleigh's family. If, however, I rightly conjecture the character of the letter found in the trunk, Cobham's negligence had rendered this policy of no avail.

Raleigh, as I have said, reached Winchester on Saturday the 12th of November; the Sunday was probably consumed in arranging his papers and other effects, so that three other days only remained to make preparations for his defence, since his trial was to take place on Thursday the 17th.

Cobham meanwhile, growing more and more bewildered as the awful day drew near, displayed so feverish an eagerness to escape from death that it became manifest he might be made to say or swear anything. Seven several times did

* Tichbourne to Cecil, Nov. 12th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

this unhappy nobleman perjure himself—for he gave upon oath eight different versions of his testimony, of which one may have possibly been true. It is nevertheless clear that he fully understood the guilt of shedding innocent blood by bearing false witness, and yet to prolong his own existence during a few sad years was prevailed upon to take the responsibility; I say prevailed upon, because there remains in my mind no shadow of a doubt that his life was promised him if by perjury he would consent to destroy Raleigh.

At length the dawn of that memorable 17th of November broke upon the old city of Winchester, whose streets, lanes, and alleys ran with liquid mire, ankle-deep, while the chill moisture of the season hung thick and heavy upon window, door, and wall. The judges, and the jury—which had been packed overnight—took their places;* the apartment was thronged with spectators, all eager, all mute with hushed expectation. At a signal from the proper officer, Raleigh entered, his tall form erect, his countenance and attitude defiant, and for awhile stood confronting the judges, the jury, and the audience, among whom were some of the noblest persons in England. What they had come together to see was a sacrifice, and the victim was now before them. It may be doubted whether within those walls the accused possessed one friend. His judges were his enemies, personal in many cases, interested in all. The Attorney and So-

* No description of the appearance of the court at Raleigh's trial having fallen in my way, I extract from a secret letter of the Conde de Villa Mediana to Philip III., an account of its aspect at Cobham's trial. "The Lord Chancellor," he says, "who is here Supreme Judge of Justice, was seated in a brocade chair under a canopy of the same, placed on a platform raised two steps above the level of the floor, on the sides of which were thirty-three earls and barons. At a table in the centre there were seated about twenty-four persons, and before the Lord Chancellor two keepers of the rolls; at the sides, twelve Juris Consults, dressed in scarlet, and one—*inquisidor y reformador* of the kingdom; all the rest were procurators and crown lawyers, the seat of the Attorney-general being directly opposite that of the Lord Chancellor; and at the corners of the said table were four Kings-at-arms, with their maces, from whence they rose when ordered to make proclamation." Carta original del Conde de Villa Mediana, a Su Md. 8 de Diciembre, 1603. Simancas.

licitor-general, Coke and Heale, who conducted the prosecution, were exact prototypes of Jefferies. Raleigh was his own counsel.

Of what did the prisoner stand accused? Of three things: first, that he desired to place upon the throne Arabella Stuart, a pert, smart, and fast young lady, who, though better than James, would have made but a sorry successor to Elizabeth; second, that he instigated Lord Cobham in behalf of this same Arabella to undertake a journey to Spain more wild and hopeless than any undertaken by Don Quixote, to obtain from the beggared sovereign of that country a sum equal to three million crowns of the present day, without security, without guarantee, without the slightest intelligible inducement beyond a verbal promise that he would try to convert a wayward girl into a queen; third, that out of this fabulous treasure Cobham was to bestow on him eight thousand crowns, together with a pension of fifteen hundred a year for supplying Philip with intelligence, and favouring a peace which both James and his ministers were eager to conclude with that prince. Of all this, how much was proved? Thus much—that Cobham related his dreams to Raleigh, who replied, laughingly, "that it would be time enough to be serious when the treasure should pass out of the realm of fancy into that of reality." So much, and no more, was Raleigh's treason. He confessed he had listened to his old friend's development of his monstrous projects, had heard of his interviews with Aremberg, and ought to have denounced him to the Government. I think he ought not, it was a reticence of which every gentleman would be guilty; but it amounted to what the law in its jargon denominates misprision of treason.

Raleigh had evidently apprehended from the first, that however trivial his offence might be, the Government would convert it into a pretext for taking away his life, if judges could be found to transform his honourable reserve into a capital crime, and if a jury of his countrymen, out of servility

to the Court, would consent to take the guilt of his blood upon their heads. From the commencement of the proceedings he was made aware of their true drift, and saw that he had to contend for his life. Amid the crowd of faces which looked down upon him from bench and niche, balcony and gallery, pale, eager, full of indefinite anxiety or expectation, he beheld few, if any, that were not hostile. The strength of the law, the influence of the Court, the envenomed shafts of personal hatred, the unquenchable energy of revenge, the technical ingenuity of venal pleaders, the scarecrow shrinking of cowardice, the stupid prejudices of superstition, were all arrayed against him.

When Coke and Heale had drained their virulence and brutality to the dregs, he rose, with all the associations of the Armada and Cadiz, of the Island Voyage, of the Guiana Expedition, of the Virginia Discovery, of the Wars of Religion in France, of the quenching of rebellion in Ireland, of Elizabeth's brilliant Court, of statesmanship, of romance, of adventure, of poetry, of love, about him, and a universal thrill of admiration went through the thronged court, for all present felt that the man then before them was the greatest man living. Should they pull him down? Should they consign him to the block, and themselves at the same time to everlasting infamy? These were the questions that went like arrows through the consciences of commissioners, council, jury, audience. Raleigh's voice was not loud, but it was full of sweetness, and of that power which springs from commanding intellect. All the treasures of learning were his—philosophy, rhetoric, history, Scripture, law, he had ransacked them all, and now, when pleading for his life, poured forth his eloquence in one grand flood, which, according to those who listened to him, seemed never to have been equalled before, and which drew tears from the eyes of many of James's noblest countrymen, whose refined sensibility proved them to be worthy of the elevated fortune they had reached.*

* 'Court and Times of James I.,' i. 20.

To make a show of deliberation, the jury remained shut up together half an hour, during which Coke, we are told in a very doubtful anecdote, went forth to walk in the garden. He was there battling probably with his own conscience, when one of his clerks came running to inform him that the jury had found Raleigh guilty of treason. "Man," he replied, "thou must be mistaken! I myself only accused him of misprision of treason." Be this as it may, Raleigh having been pronounced guilty, the day was fixed for his execution, and the court broke up.*

The view taken of these proceedings by the representatives of foreign governments differed according to their tempers, and the amount of their knowledge of our institutions and national character. Familiar with conspiracies at home, they not only accorded a ready faith to the fact that a plot had existed, but accepting the assertions of the crown-lawyers as proofs, concluded all whom they accused to be guilty. Beaumont, the French ambassador, is said to have assured Henri IV.† that he had seen two intercepted letters from Count Aremberg to the Archduke, by which Raleigh's complicity would have been clearly proved could they have brought the letters into court. That if he made this statement he lied, is clear from the subsequent conduct of James and his ministers, who, during the thirteen years of Raleigh's imprisonment, endeavoured by reiterated investigations to

* Manuscript account of trial by Ortelio Renzo, Jan. 31st, 1604. State Paper Office. Arraignment of Sir Walter Raleigh attributed to Sir Thomas Overbury. Somers, 'Tracts,' ii. 409.

† Carte, iii. 718-721. Lingard, ix. 9. The impression made on the mind of Henri IV. by the despatches of his ambassador may be seen from the following extract of a letter from the minister Villeroi to Beaumont, dated November 16th, 1603. Having spoken of the intrigues of the Spanish agents in Germany, he proceeds thus:—"Quand j'en scaurai davantage, je vous en ferai pas, comme sa Majesté desire que vous fassiez de ceque deviendront les prisonniers de la cour, ne pouvant croire que l'on fasse mourir Ralló estant innocent seulement pour faire compaguie aux autres."

I fail to discover from Beaumont's letters any proofs that he was convinced of Raleigh's guilt, though he appears, like Napier, to have been sorely perplexed by the attempt to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

discover something like a fact which might even appear to justify their barbarous treatment of him.

I am not in a condition to prove that Beaumont did not make the statement attributed to him, though the following passage of a letter from a French gentleman of high honour and integrity satisfies my mind that no statement of the kind is to be found in the existing despatches of that ambassador:—"I have read," he says, "all Beaumont's despatches of November and December (1603) without being able to find the passage in question, and by way of proof, I have carefully transcribed every passage in which the name of Cecil occurs." This he did because Beaumont was said to have learned from Cecil what he wrote to his Government respecting the intercepted letters.

The Venetian ambassadors,* in conveying to the seigniory an account of the Winchester trials, adopted the current theory of the conspiracy, observing that its object was to kill the King, and raise Arabella to the throne. As it was assumed that the lady herself must have possessed some knowledge of what was to be accomplished in her behalf, she was constrained to be present at Winchester, where her fate would be decided by the disclosures made at the trials. Her innocence, however, might be inferred, they said, from the fact that when Lord Cobham sought by letter to involve her in treasonable correspondence with Spain, she carried the missive with the seal still unbroken to James, but how in that case she knew the dangerous nature of the proposal made to her is not explained. Her anxiety was at length, it is said, put an end to by Raleigh, who, after sentence of death had been pronounced against him, acquitted her of all participation in the conspiracy, but as he never admitted himself to have been cognizant of any conspiracy, his chivalrous declaration in favour of Arabella may safely be regarded as a fiction.

* Duodo and Molino, Dec. 1st (N.S.), 1603. MSS. Venetian Archives.

CHAPTER IV.

LADY RALEIGH AND THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Around Thursday, November 17th, 1603, many incidents worthy of notice grouped themselves. Raleigh appears to have been informed immediately after his condemnation that he would be suffered to live eighteen days, during which time therefore it behoved him to close his accounts with Time, and prepare for Eternity.

It is easy, I am aware, to be stoical when it is another man's life, not yours, that is in jeopardy; yet with all my love for Raleigh's character, and profound reverence for his memory, I am unable to refrain from blaming the course he now pursued. He felt it was blamable, and blamed himself.* There was a violent struggle going on in his mind—he was ambitious, he felt that his life, if he perished then, might be looked upon by posterity as a play not played out; he had a son, an only son, whom he dearly loved; he had a wife whom he loved still more dearly; and who, in spite of the hard usage she had met with from him in the outset, had proved herself the truest of true wives—her love rising as the tide of misfortune rose about them both, shedding its pure splendour over his dungeon, as it would, he doubted not, over his grave.

These were circumstances which could not fail to exert a powerful influence on his conduct, yet they should not have

* "It was for you and yours," he writes to his wife, "that I desired life, but it is true I disdain myself for begging it." Works, viii. 619.

extorted from him the letter he wrote to James, entreating his forgiveness. He could not have forgotten that many of those Romans whom in secret he emulated, would not, when they knew themselves to be the victims of injustice, have stooped to ask their lives of king or emperor; their souls therefore—though it pains me to say it—were of nobler mould; they valued life no less than he, but when the inevitable hour presented itself, they bent their proud necks to the axe without a murmur.

Once and again in the course of his life Raleigh suffered the troubles of the hour to disorder his ideas, so that he was unable to discern clearly their relations and connection. In such a frame of mind, hope interweaving itself with apprehension, and worldly considerations struggling with doubts of what might be beyond the grave—he may have cheated himself into the belief that he cherished something like love for the man who he knew could by a word reopen before him the grand vista of life, or consign him to a scaffold. This betrayed him into entreaties unworthy of his noble nature, and the memory of which still tarnishes his reputation.

While matters were thus with Raleigh, all his friends forsook him and fled; nay, not all—two women who still occupy a place amid the highest pinnacles of fame were found to sympathize with his sufferings, and drain their influence to the dregs in the endeavour to save his life. Of these, the first, by the laws of nature and of love, was the woman whom, as he says, he had chosen and loved in his happiest time: broken down with sorrow, and not knowing whom else to address in the blank desert in which she now found herself, this true wife, as he rightly terms her, attempted in her most touching language to soften the heart of Cecil:—

"If the grieved tears of an unfortunate woman may receive any favour, or the unspeakable sorrows of my dead heart may receive any comfort, then let my sorrows come

before you, which if you truly knew, I assure myself you would pity me; but more especially your poor unfortunate friend, which relieth wholly on your honourable and wonted favour. I know in my own soul, which something knoweth his mind, that he doth, and ever hath done, not only honoured the King, but naturally loveth him—and God knoweth far from him to wish him harm, but to have spent his life as soon for him as any creature living. I most humbly beseech your honour, even for God's sake, to be good unto him, to once more make him your creature, your relied friend, and deal with the King for him; for one that is more worthy of favour than many else; having worth, and honesty and wisdom to be a friend; pity the name of your ancient friend, and his poor little creature that may live to honour you, that we all may lift up our hands and hearts in prayer for you and yours. Bind this our poor family to praise your honour and wonted good-nature; let the whole world praise your love to my poor unfortunate husband; for Christ's sake, which rewardeth all mercies, pity his just case; and God for his infinite mercy bless you for ever, and work in the King mercy.

"She that will truly honour you in all misfortunes,

"E. Raleigh.

"P.S. I am not able, I protest before God, to stand on my trembling legs, otherwise I would have waited now on you to be directed wholly by you." *

The other woman who now came forward was no less a person than "Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother." It is known that with nearly all members of the Sidney family Raleigh had lived from his earliest youth on terms of familiar friendship; but no trace I believe of his love for Mary, the inspirer of the Arcadia, is to be found, save that which now became visible. "I do call to mind," observes Dudley Carleton, "a pretty secret that the Lady of Pem-

* MS. 'Burleigh Papers,' British Museum.

broke hath written to her son Philip, and charged him of all her blessings to employ his own credit and his friends, and all he can do for Raleigh's pardon; and though she does little good, yet she is to be commended for doing her best in showing veteris vestigia flammæ." *

Two days after the date of Carleton's letter, in which the above passage occurs, the work of death commenced at Winchester with the two priests, Watson and Clarke.† Eight days later, Lord Cecil sent his brother-in-law, George Brooke, to the block, and circulated the report that in four other days, Grey, Cobham, and Markham should follow. Raleigh, who may have suspected, but could not certainly know, the system of intrigue secretly going on, is said to have requested that Lord Cobham might be put to death before him, not doubting that when he should be on the scaffold, and see there could be no escape from the axe, he would, through fear of judgment beyond the grave, retract his accusations. Equally convinced that such would be the result, Cecil and James took care to defeat Raleigh's hopes by relieving Cobham from his apprehensions. When with Grey and Markham he was led forth as to execution, he knew that the whole was to prove a farce, and was able to play the hero accordingly.

Kept sedulously in the dark, Raleigh, who from a window in the Donjon Keep beheld a scaffold erected in the court below, and saw the prisoners led towards it between their own coffins, gave a serious interpretation to what he witnessed, especially when he observed the scaffold to be strewn with straw, the block set up, and the executioner standing beside it with his axe. Markham first mounted

* 'Court and Times of James I.,' i. 26. Carleton to Chamberlain, Nov. 27th, 1603.

† Up to the 15th of December (N.S.) it was generally believed that all the conspirators would be executed except Raleigh: "La sentenza è di gia stata esseguita contra li doi preti, et venerdi saranno fatti morire tutti li altre eccetto Rali." Molino, Despatch of the above date. Venetian Archives.

the steps, which he did with manly firmness, refusing the napkin offered by a friend to cover his face, saying he could look on death without blushing. When Raleigh saw him removed, and Grey ascend, he may have thought that the inferior offender had been reprieved from the penalty which would yet be inflicted on the superior. Grey, who supposed Markham to have been executed, spurned the straw aside with his foot as he walked towards the block, to discover if there were any traces of blood. When time had been allowed him for his devotions, he also was led away, upon which the spectator in the Tower must have begun to suspect the real nature of the exhibition. Cobham was brought out last, and prayed so loudly, and with so much apparent fervour, that he excited the jests and laughter of those who stood around in the rain, and were probably in the secret. Then followed one of the tricks of the stage—the three offenders were brought together on the scaffold, the King's pardon was announced,* the spectators shouted, the apparatus of death was swept away, and Raleigh, who must have been sorely perplexed by the aspect of the whole proceeding, was left to ponder, in what frame of mind may be conjectured, on the fate which the scene he had witnessed boded to him.

As no one knows what life is, whence it comes, or how, so no one can conjecture what elements concur to make up the life's experience of another. Forward from that day to the 29th of October, 1618, Raleigh stood every moment on the steps of the scaffold. While we move in the light, it costs us few pangs to reflect that we must sooner or later shrink behind the curtain of darkness, which death stands ready to draw over us; neither do we appear to witness anything strange, when as we walk along the course of life the grim spectre snatches away one companion after another from our side; but it would cost us some effort to advance during fifteen years cheek-by-jowl with the grisly phantom,

* King to Sheriff of Hampshire, Dec. 7th, 1603. MS. State Paper Office.

always visible, whether we paced the floor of a dungeon in the Tower, wrote 'Histories of the World,' navigated the Atlantic, or lay fever-stricken amid the bogs of Guiana.

I have said that Raleigh was to have been beheaded on the 12th of December, and it is currently believed that on the night of the 11th he wrote that magnificent poem "The Soul's Errand." The authorship of this piece is matter of doubt, as well as the date of its production, some attributing it to Sylvester, others to Raleigh. If we are moved by the force of analogy, we shall hardly accord to the translator of 'Du Bartas' credit for having given birth to so vigorous and daring a poem, every line of which is in perfect harmony with Raleigh's character :—

> "Go, since I needs must die,
> And give the world the lie."

For fixing the period at which it was written we have no data, but that it is the offspring of fierce misanthropy cannot be doubted. We know of no occasion on which the gentle Sylvester could have been inspired by such a feeling; but Raleigh lay in the Tower in 1592,* and was then as likely as at any other period to have said—

> "Tell potentates they live,
> Acting by others' actions :
> Not loved, unless they give ;
> Not strong but by their factions :
> If potentates reply,
> Give potentates the lie."

This was meant for the Tudor ; in the blindness of his rage he might then have written—

> "Tell love it is but lust."

Eleven years later, he could not have uttered such a blas-

* Hallam, in his 'Introduction to the Literature of Europe,' ii. 224, is doubtful to whom this poem should be attributed, but rejects the claim of Sylvester. Campbell says he had seen it in a MS. collection of 1593, which puts Pembroke's authorship out of the question, but makes in no way against Raleigh.

phemy against truth, in face of the holy zeal he had witnessed in Elizabeth Throgmorton and Mary Sidney. Indeed, with the shadows of death hanging over him, he retracted the slander against human nature, in that outpouring of his soul's agony to her who had shown him by acts of the loftiest devotion that love is something better than lust, and who by her conduct during upwards of fifty years demonstrated the same truth still more strongly to the world.

On the 9th of December, Tichbourne received a warrant from James, to deliver up to the Lieutenant of the Tower, Sir George Harvey, then at Winchester, certain State prisoners named in the document, including Sir Walter Raleigh.* On what day they departed from Winchester I have nowhere seen stated, but as they reached the Tower on the 16th,† they probably set out on the 10th; for it took them seven days to perform the journey down, so that we can hardly allow them less than six to return. The events of five weeks had wrought a wonderful change in public opinion respecting Raleigh. We hear of no mobs greeting him with execrations on his way back to the Tower; it is indeed probable that the populace had begun to share the sentiment of him who declared, that although, while he knew not the man, he would have gone a hundred miles to see him hanged, yet after having his imagination kindled by witnessing his bearing in court, and hearing him pour forth his eloquent and convincing defence, he would have gone a thousand miles to save his life. Exactly so it seems to have fared with the London populace; for when the great prisoner emerged from his cell, and stood to take the air on the Tower wall, multitudes thronged reverently to gaze at him, as at a

* King to Keeper of Winchester Castle, Dec. 9th, 1603. State Paper Office.

† Carleton to Chamberlain, Dec. 21st, 1603. State Paper Office. According to the accounts of the Lieutenant of the Tower, examined by Mr Collier, Raleigh was sent to the Fleet about the Christmas of 1603, and remained above a fortnight. 'Notes and Queries.' No. 107, p. 7.

martyr; while he, it is said, looked down forgivingly upon them.*

The current of public indignation began from the same date to set in steadily against those who had been engaged in his overthrow, and in history, and national feeling, has gone on increasing in force ever since. Who now pronounces with pleasure the name of Anderson or Gaudy, Coke or Heale, Suffolk or Northampton, Cecil or James? while the name of Raleigh is never repeated without enthusiasm, and the halo of glory with which it is encircled goes on brightening from year to year, and will go on as long as our English annals shall continue to be studied by the honourable and upright of mankind.

The winter of 1603 was severe and gloomy, sharp frosts alternating with fogs and rain. As the courtiers passed by Wilton on their way back to town, they beheld its pleasant walks rendered almost impassable by mire, and were greeted at their return by dense mists in which lurked the virus of the Plague.† Nations, vicious at other times, seem to grow more reckless in vice during periods of public calamity: Athens, Florence, London, furnished each in its turn an illustration of this truth, and James's court appeared desirous of outdoing the rest of the population. Plays, masques, feasting, and revelry mocked at the Plague, though there was not one among the gallants, male or female, who did not shiver in secret at the spectre on the pale horse. What the foreign diplomatists thought of James and his doings we know from the accounts they forwarded to their respective governments, and what by the English was thought of them we discover no less clearly from the contemptuous gossip of the times. Three ambassadors, those of Spain, France, and Poland, disturbed the company at Hampton Court by their jealousies and quarrels for precedence, so that they had often

* Waade to Cecil, Dec. 9th, 1605. 'Burleigh Papers,' British Museum.
† Carleton to Chamberlain, Jan. 15th, 1604. MS. State Paper Office.

to be excluded from the royal banquets through fear of bloodshed.*

In imperial times, when the effigies of the great men of the Republic were borne in procession through Rome, the people, we are told, gazed more earnestly at the gap in the series which should have been filled with the statues of Brutus and Cassius than at all the rest of the exciting show. So it was at Hampton Court, where all thoughtful eyes glanced painfully at the place that should have been occupied by Elizabeth's old Captain of the Guard. He had now taken up very different quarters, where, instead of mirth and revelry, he was to become acquainted with solitude, and such thoughts as it inspires in the great. He saw the sword of Damocles over his head, he felt its point at times touch his scalp, and made magnanimous resolutions, to which he generally, though not always, adhered. The whole world of science, literature, and philosophy, lay before him—to what department should he devote himself? Science first presented itself, and he became absorbed by the wish to become a great chemist, to extract the virtues out of physical substances, and with them to fabricate medicines for the cure of diseases and the prolongation of life.

The sixteenth century had been mentally a slave to the alembic, which, wrapped in clouds of mystery, had descended from the middle ages upon it. Both the Bacons, Roger and Francis, worshipped this type of physical philosophy, and Raleigh knelt no less reverently by their side. Whether or not he dreamed of the fluid which should turn all metals into gold I am unable to say; but he did certainly hope in the loneliness and stillness of his laboratory in the Tower to extract from the secret forces of nature an elixir which should subdue all diseases, and sometimes combat successfully even with poison. Upon his spirit thus confined broke in at times the salt spray of the ocean, upon whose billows he could not avoid hoping he should once more ride

* Ibid., ubi supra.

in triumph. Could he not therefore turn his present troubles into a source of solace and refreshment for mariners? When he had been their companion on far-off seas, beneath Canopus and the Magellanic Clouds, he had witnessed with keen pain the sufferings they often endured through lack of fresh water. Could he not bring the alembic to their aid? In what was called his "Still-house," erected in the Lieutenant's garden, he commenced a series of experiments, which resulted in the discovery of the means by which sea-water may be made sweet; and thus, in addition to the potato and tobacco, became a benefactor of man. Unfortunately very few particulars of this discovery are on record; but when late in the eighteenth century Dr Irving obtained from parliament five thousand pounds for the invention of his method of sweetening sea-water, he appears to have done little more than revive Raleigh's process. Of this all we know is derived from the following passage from the record of his conversations with Sir Thomas Wilson in the Tower:—

"This day Sir Walter Raleigh fell to discoursing of the wonders he had done for the benefit of the kingdom; how much he had spent for the service thereof in discoveries; and after fell to tell me of his inventing the means to make salt water fresh or sweet, by furnaces of copper in the forecastle, and distilling of the salt water as it were by a bucket, putting in a pipe, and within a quarter of an hour it will run by a spigot, so that he had by that distilled water given two hundred and forty men every day quarts apiece, and the water as sweet as milk."*

When men enter on any course of study they seldom limit their researches within the bounds of mere utility, but push forward their investigations to the utmost of their power, leaving to chance the application of the results. It was thus with Raleigh, whose chemical extracts were so many and so various that the physicians and apothecaries

* MS. State Paper Office, September 29th, 1618.

of his time considered them beyond the reach of analysis. Wilson, a profligate and profane instrument of the Court, placed about Raleigh to study and report upon his actions and language, regarding with astonishment the multitude of his bottles, vases, jars, and phials, said he believed "they contained all the spirits in the world except the Spirit of God."

In producing these spirits and essences Raleigh took so much delight that he seems to have often spent whole days in his laboratory, which stood in the garden opposite the entrance to the Bloody Tower, on a spot now gravelled over, and forming part of the place of exercise for the garrison.

James, who took credit for extraordinary clemency because he had not put to death a man whose guilt had not, to say the least of it, been proved, amused the public in the spring of 1604 by one of those displays of mock generosity which he hoped would render him popular among the English. Setting out from Westminster in his barge with the Queen and Prince Henry, attended by the whole body of his ministers and courtiers, in a little fleet of boats, he dropped down the river to the Tower. As his intention had been made known, vast multitudes had collected to behold the royal cavalcade, and so thronged all the approaches to the fortress, especially the Tower Stairs, that the King and his suite experienced much difficulty in ascending.

The act he came to perform would, had it been complete, have well entitled him to popular applause, since it was nothing less than to throw open the door of every dungeon and cell, and give liberty to the captives. Now therefore the public doubtless expected that the old Captain of Elizabeth's Guard would be withdrawn from his laboratory and favoured with congenial employment on the ocean. Such, however, was not James's method of proceeding. On the day before his visit to the Tower, Raleigh, with the other conspirators, had been removed to the Fleet and other

prisons. This surely was keeping the word of promise to the ear but breaking it to the hope. However, if the great prisoner had been sent to languish elsewhere, the rabble and the monarch were entertained by bull-baiting, by fights between other fierce animals, and by feasts and shows which gladdened the hearts of the thoughtless, but suggested dark forebodings to the minds of reflecting men.*

It was well for Raleigh that he could take refuge in study from the blows now aimed at him by fortune. The conviction was pressing on him that he might soon have to say with Job, "Naked came I forth from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return to the womb of earth." The blue-bonneted gentlemen from beyond the Tweed, together with sundry rivals on this side the Border, were beginning to take note of his feathers, and considering where they should begin to pluck. Fortune in Elizabeth's time had led him by the hand up to the very pinnacle of her high places, lavished upon him castles, manors, patents, monopolies, wardenships, lord-lieutenancies, governorships, distinguished rank in army and navy, with privileges at Court accorded to few. To advance from the highest point is to descend; and Raleigh, as we have seen, had been for some time on the downward path. His fall was now to become more rapid. Early in July he received from the King an order to deliver up the seal of the Duchy of Cornwall, upon which he addressed to his persecutor one of those servile and profane effusions which constitute the greatest blot upon his memory.

"I was of late sent unto," he says, "for the seal of the Duchy of Cornwall, which, together with the seal of the office of warden and chancellor, I received at the hands of my late sovereign. This seal appertaineth not unto me to dispose, but unto your Majesty only, and therefore I have entreated my Lord Cecil to present the same. For myself,

* Nicol Molin to the Senate, March 26th (N.S.), 1604. Venetian Archives.

I have interest in nothing but your Majesty's mercy only—God, who knows what faith I do and have ever borne to your Majesty, move your imperial heart to perfect graces begun. If I be here restrained until the powers both of my mind and body be so enfeebled as I cannot hope to do your Majesty some extraordinary and acceptable service, whereby I may truly approve my faith and intentions to my sovereign lord, God doth know then it would have been happiest for me to have died long since; for the everlasting God doth bear me record it is to no other chief end that I desire to live a day. I most humbly beseech your Majesty, even for the love of our Lord Jesus, to think that I can never forget the mercies of the King that hath vouchsafed to lift me out of the grave, being then friendless, lost, and forsaken of all men. Pardon me, most renowned King, but to say thus much, that if it shall please your Majesty to have compassion on me, while I have yet limbs and eyes, that your Majesty shall never have cause to accuse or repent your Majesty's mercies towards me."*

In blasphemous extravagance such as this Raleigh's enemies might have found some colour for the charge of impiety which they constantly brought against him. But his capacious mind, agitated by irregular and undisciplined emotions, chafing and panting with the longing for action, and not yet voluntarily chained to the car of thought, only betrayed in such phrases the force of its internal agony. Still, interpret them by what rules we may, they are so essentially despicable that it is impossible to avoid blushing as we read. It is true that James's conduct towards Raleigh had not been all bad; from a natural impulse of humanity, through deference to public opinion, or through apprehension of future judgment, he exhibited towards him fitful relaxations of cruelty, leaving him in constant expectation of death, yet restoring to him much of the property and sources of income forfeited by his attainder, chief among

* Raleigh to the King, July 31st, 1604. MS. State Paper Office.

the latter of which was his wine-patent. From this indeed he derived so large a revenue—all vintners in the kingdom excepting those of the City of London paying to his receivers one pound a year—that it was deemed impolitic to leave him in possession of it much longer, and accordingly in the following December it passed into the hands of Raleigh's great enemy, the Earl of Nottingham, James's cousin by marriage.

The evils resulting from the unrestrained influx of Scotchmen into England soon began to appear.* Losing sight of the political advantages of the Union, the English suffered themselves to be chafed by the rough barbarism of the strangers, who, with something like the insolence of conquest, jostled the Southrons in street and palace. Difference in dress, speech, and manners is the source of that antipathy which foreigners cherish for each other; and in London the Scots of that period were exclusively regarded as foreigners, since they neither understood the English language nor could all at once adopt English habits. National dislike accordingly boiled over, not only in ribald songs and stinging epigrams, but in the flash of dirk and rapier, the clash of which, accompanied by oaths and a rush of gutturals, often rang at night through the streets of London. To James's national partiality and desire to put a stop to these outbreaks must be attributed the blackguardism of the following proclamation:—

"Whereas certain loose people, commonly called swaggerers, and of the damned crew whose names are hereunder written, have of late raised many quarrels against the subjects and servants of the kingdom of Scotland, and be the occasion of much trouble to the disturbance of the peace of this kingdom if it be not prevented: our pleasure therefore is that you shall cause these fellows to be apprehended, and any other of like quality whom you shall be . . . . of by other means and put them under . . . . of the peace

* Raumer, ii. 196.

towards all our subjects, and these shall be your warrant."*

When the necessity of inaction is first experienced by a man of energetic character he is sure to overrate its effects upon mind and body. Raleigh, therefore, in the first dawn of his captivity feared for his health—for his reason—for his life; and though the company of his wife and son in some degree mitigated the anguish of seclusion, he never relinquished his endeavour to recover his freedom, even though it should be coupled with exile from England. One of the worst features of adversity is that in some situations it necessitates dissimulation. Raleigh thoroughly understood Cecil's policy, which was to keep him out of the way without destroying him; yet as to give evidence of this knowledge would only have been to blight his own hopes, however frail they might be, he kept the mask of hypocrisy perpetually before his visage, in the vain hope of warding off the penetrating glance of his false friend. By the same motive was the minister likewise actuated. What he had accomplished by the 'Secret Correspondence' had been then disclosed only to the King and his intimate friends, and he vehemently desired to escape the condemnation of which he would have been certain had his villainy been revealed to the public. To prevent if possible even a suspicion of the fact from becoming general, he always affected a friendship for his victim, and so was constrained to pursue a line of conduct not wholly irreconcilable with such a profession.

Buoyed up by hope, Lady Raleigh now made the most strenuous efforts to obtain her husband's enlargement, which Cecil, to whom her applications were chiefly addressed, suggested should be solicited through the instrumentality of some other courtier. Something in the behaviour of the Secretary intended to produce such an impression awakened in Raleigh's mind the belief that his deliverance might indeed be at hand. At the bare prospect all the faculties of his

* This was addressed to Sir John Popham, Chief Justice, April 15th, 1604. MS. State Paper Office.

soul started into activity; he formed a thousand projects: restricted liberty at home—exile to some foreign country—the chances of war—the endless resources of maritime adventure: to be at large, to plunge into some scheme that might absorb his thoughts, and give full scope to his genius, there was no sacrifice he would not make, no humiliation to which he would not stoop. Up to this time his lands had not been wholly secured to the use of his wife and child, and he therefore strove earnestly to bring about the necessary settlement; he then touched upon the subject of his pardon, and entreated that he might not owe it to the interference of any one but Cecil, not being as yet able to conceive the weary years through which he should solicit it in vain, and the fact that the block alone would put a period to his solicitations.

"If I have a pardon," he says, "I may, notwithstanding, be restrained or confined. If I may not be here about London, I shall be most contented to be confined within the hundred of Sherbourne, or if I cannot be allowed so much, I shall be contented to live in Holland, where I shall chance get some employment upon the Indies." Should he fail in obtaining this privilege, he sought to have revived in his favour one of the practices of Elizabeth's time, and suggested that he might be delivered into the safe keeping of some nobleman or bishop, or be intrusted with the care of one of Cecil's parks. Confinement, as he then believed, threatened to undermine his health, to restore which he entreated the King's permission to repair to Bath. He could not as yet persuade himself that James meant, not merely to undermine his health, but to bring his life also as soon as possible to a close; though he at length found, after twelve years longer of insidious endeavour, that his captive's constitution would not yield to the rigours of imprisonment.

Raleigh's entreaties being unheeded, he was fain to derive what solace he could from study, and the company

of his wife, who, in the spring of 1605, brought him a second son, whom, in honour of his brother, he christened Carew. Not long after, we find the unhappy mother appealing earnestly to James in behalf of herself and her children.

"I beseech your Majesty, in the name of Jesus Christ, to signify your gracious pleasure concerning myself and my poor children. That, whereas your Majesty hath disposed of all my husband's estate to the value of four thousand a-year, and that there remaineth nothing to give me and my children bread but one fee-farm, held of the Bishop of Sarum, which your Majesty bestowed upon my husband during his life. That it will please your Majesty of your abundant goodness to relinquish your Majesty's right in the reversion of that farm, and suffer those poor harmless children to enjoy the same, in imitation of the most just and merciful God, who, though he punisheth the fathers, yet he gave the land to the guiltless, innocent children; and we shall ever pray to God for the increase of your Majesty's dearest comforts."*

Cecil, raised to the Earldom of Salisbury, May 4th, 1605, signed the draught of a warrant drawn up in reply to this petition.

"Whereas, we understand that, by rigour of law, the reversion of Sir Walter Raleigh's lands may come into our hands, yet, seeing his conveyance was made in the Queen our sister's time, as also because we have given himself those lands for his own life, our pleasure is, that you cause a grant to be drawn for us to sign, wherein all our title and interest may be passed over unto his said wife and children, that we be no more troubled with their pitiful cries and complaints for that business."†

* MS. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum. † Ibid.

CHAPTER V.

RE-IMMURED IN THE BLOODY TOWER.

Owing to the unwearied exertions made by Lady Raleigh, who understood nothing of the real feelings or designs of Salisbury, the belief prevailed throughout this summer in Dorsetshire that James's government was about to relent. Impetuous and hopeful, Bessy made two journeys to Sherbourne, where, amid various other improvements and alterations, she caused two new walks to be cut through the grounds, fully persuaded that, before those walks should be strewn with autumn leaves, she should enjoy the supreme happiness of strolling with her lord in those sweet solitudes as of old. Grief had for two years turned her energies in a different direction; scarcely one day during that period had found her free from anguish, since she could never be sure that the next would not be the last of her husband's life. Fear, therefore, kept her constantly hovering about the Court or the Tower, importuning the ministers, or endeavouring by all the arts of affection to mitigate the gloom of the Bloody Tower. Sherbourne Castle had been consequently neglected; cobwebs hung from the walls; rust gathered on the armour; the chambers remained unswept, the beds unmade. A gleam of hope now illumined the interior of Raleigh's dwelling; his armour was taken down from the wall and polished, his books were arranged in order, and all that a wife's care could accomplish was done to cheer him at his expected return.

Captain Kemys had been intrusted, after his release from the Tower, with the wardenship of Sherbourne Castle, of which he took as much care as could be looked for from an old naval officer. All Raleigh's companions and dependents made this place their home when they had no other. Among these was Captain Nichols, a learned mathematician and able engineer, whom Raleigh, when thrown into the Tower, recommended to the Earl of Northumberland, who employed him as inspector of the works at Sion. Cotterel also, it will be remembered, the bearer of Raleigh's letter to Cobham in the Tower, obtained an asylum at Sherbourne, where he yet remained, and was known in the neighbourhood under the nom de guerre of Captain Sampson.*

The summer wore away, autumn with its mists and damps approached, and Raleigh still lay captive in his unwholesome cell. Sorrow often embitters the sweetest tempers, and renders the noblest minds incapable of guarding at all moments against the inroads of peevishness. Few men have loved as Raleigh loved his wife; no woman ever loved more passionately or enduringly than that wife loved him. Yet perpetual conflict with disappointment, the heart-sickness of hope deferred, the falling away of friends, the triumph of enemies, the incessant fretting which they felt in common, now threw a shadow over their lives. What blame there was rested neither on wife nor husband, but on both. Bessy's powers of endurance appear to have given way first; exhausted by long journeys, by incessant solicitations, by correspondence, by harsh rebuffs, she became wayward and angry, so that she seems to have been betrayed for a moment into unkind reproaches towards the man whom, nevertheless, she had enshrined for ever in her heart of hearts. Wounded by her words, Raleigh became unjust in his turn, and complained of her both to Waade and Cecil.

Public affairs were in some way interwoven with Raleigh's domestic sorrows; suspicion of having been concerned by

* Cotterel's 'Examination,' Feb. 4th, 1607. MS. State Paper Office.

conference, or through the intermediation of his wife, with the men of the 5th of November, now weighed upon him. His intimate friend, the Earl of Northumberland, seems to have been acquainted beforehand with the design of the Jesuits; and other individuals, who, if not actively engaged in the conspiracy, certainly tampered with its elements, had interviews with Raleigh, though the nature and object of their intercourse have never come to light. It seems possible that Lady Raleigh, a woman of strong passions and fierce spirit, who cherished, as she was justified in doing, a deadly hatred of the King, may not have kept quite clear of all connection with the plotters. However this may be, Raleigh believed her about this time to have unwittingly exposed him to fresh attacks from the Government. All who bear in mind the part played by Waade in Raleigh's story will know how to interpret the language in which he maliciously describes Raleigh's professions of innocence.

"It is not possible," he says, "for any man to protest more ignorance in the matter than he doth; laying all these rash errors and frantic parts on the folly of her whose imperfections he should conceal."*

The biography of a perfect man yet remains to be written; Raleigh made no claims to be so considered. He was a man of many failings, defects, imperfections, vices; but he was also a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief: as such, let us proceed with him on his way, censuring where we must, excusing where we can. In the agony of his tribulation, he now unburdened his heart to Salisbury, having no one else to whom, as he believed, he could speak with so much freedom.

"I lay before your Lordship the true causes of my importunities. The one is, which I speak in the fear and presence of God, that I am, every second or third night, in danger either of sudden death, or of the loss of my limbs

* Letter to Salisbury, Dec. 13th, 1605. MS. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

and sense, being sometimes two hours without feeling a motion of my hand and whole arm. I complain not of it, I know it is vain, for there is none that hath compassion thereof. The other, that I shall be made more than weary of my life by her crying and bewailing, who will return in post, when she hears of your departure, and nothing done. She hath already brought her eldest son in one hand, and her sucking child in another, crying out of her and their destruction, charging me with unnatural negligence, and that, having provided for mine own life, I am without sense or compassion of theirs.

"These torments, added to my desolate life, receiving nothing but torments and outcries where I should look for some comfort, together with my consideration of my cruel destiny, my days and times worn out in sorrow and imprisonment, is sufficient either utterly to distract me, or to make me curse the time that ever I was born into the world, and had a being, did I not hope that God will be pleased to accept those miseries in this world, which my neglect of Him and my offences against Him have deserved. I beseech your Lordship, as you must one day beg comfort of God, and cry unto Him for his abundant mercies, that you will be pleased to spare the time, and to push and effect in some sort your heart's intents towards me. If I could either help or blame their cries and impatience, I would, for myself, leave all to God and your Lordship; but if your Lordship spare one thought towards this estate of mine, I cannot but hope for some happy end, which I leave your Lordship to resolve of."*

Raleigh in the above letter uses, it will be perceived, no expressions which could have justified the language of Waade. On the contrary, though his wife's reproaches could not be other than bitter to him, he yet took the circumstances of her situation into account, and admitted that,

* MS. 'Burleigh Papers.' British Museum.

though unjust, they were extremely natural, and therefore no way deserving of blame.

Few examples are on record of the struggles through which a powerful mind turns from action to speculation. Raleigh was naturally framed rather to make history than to write it; but reflecting in his solitude that there are more ways of serving mankind than by policy or war, he plunged from the sphere of action into that of thought, and gradually formed the design of reviewing the entire story of the world, from its conception in the mind of God to the moment at which it came in contact with the historian's individuality. In this purpose he was strengthened by some changes which had been recently made in the society of the Tower. In the England of those days, spirits too restless, too daring, too vast, to be easily dealt with, were usually sent thither till the Government could discover some means of neutralizing their influence, or some feasible pretext for cutting them off. Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland of his family, though by no means a great, was yet a remarkable man, mingling science with politics, and Ovidian* effeminacy with the intrigues of a Catiline; he now naturally found his way to the Tower, where his father had been assassinated, and where the most illustrious of his friends was then awaiting assassination. Northumberland's means were large, and the liberality with which he shared them with his friends shed a lustre on his name. Science had not yet been clearly discriminated in popular apprehension from magic and other occult studies; and accordingly Percy's application to what the vulgar deemed unlawful investigations procured for him the name of the Wizard Earl.† Some credit is due to James and his ministers for the forms which society in the Tower was sometimes allowed

* His Treatise on love, more represensible than that of Ovid, still exists in MS.

† Wood, 'Athenæ Oxonienses.'

to assume—I say sometimes, because indulgence occasionally gave place to extreme rigour, which in particular instances degenerated into cruelty. In Percy's case lenity was so predominant that, but for his being restrained from changing his place of residence, he might have been said to be as much master of the dwelling as he would have been at Sion. He had apartments whenever he chose for his son or his daughter, he kept there open house for his friends, and when any female prisoner of rank and beauty came thither, no matter for what crime or enormity, he enjoyed access to her apartments, and made love to her after his wonted fashion.

By sending genius and learning to the Tower, James now converted it into a sort of rival to "the groves of Academe." Shakespeare was probably too politic to risk the loss of Court favour by visiting the new academy—unless when Southampton, whom James suspected of familiarity with his queen,* came to breathe malaria for a while amid his old enemies; but Ben Jonson, more jovial and reckless, obeyed the attraction of good cheer, and dined and drank with Raleigh and the magi, whose perilous speculations inspired him with no alarm. What those speculations were we may in part conjecture from the obloquy then cast upon them. Thomas Hariot, the man who had surveyed Virginia, now ranked with Hues and Warner among Percy's magi;† and as he lay open to the suspicion of scepticism, helped to fasten the same charge on his associates. Machiavelli, Giordano Bruno, and Vanini were then commonly read by philosophical students; and as Raleigh now began to carry back his thoughts to "the womb of nature, and perhaps her grave," he yielded to the temptation which, sooner or later, involves all thoughtful men in the sweet bewilderment of metaphysics.

But if Raleigh's days were often rendered cheerful by the society of men with minds so capacious, with fancy so

* Birch, ii. 394. † Wood, 'Athenæ Oxonienses,' i. 460.

fertile, with thoughts and ideas so diversified, the hours of the night were too frequently consumed by the precursors of paralysis, which periodically attacked him in the darkness; while dank exhalations from the river and the Tower ditch filled his chamber. All they to whom meditation is happiness receive the visit of the brightest ideas at night. It is a grand poetical conception that in the impenetrable gloom of chaos the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Man also struggles with chaos in the night, and sends his spirit forth over its limitless expanse to gather creative force; but Raleigh, than whom no man was ever more fitly framed for enjoying this delight, received in the spring of 1606 a check which seemed to threaten a sudden termination to his studies. The paralytic symptoms he described to Cecil went on increasing, till, on the 26th of March, he obtained leave to consult a physician. At Court his complaints of illness were probably looked upon as fictions, but they were now backed by the authority of Dr Turner, whose certificate was addressed to the Lords of the Council:—

"Sir Walter Raleigh's complaining is in this manner—all his left side is extreme cold, void of sense and motion, or numb. His fingers on the same side beginning to be contracted, and his tongue taken in some part, insomuch that he speaketh weakly, and it is to be feared he may utterly lose the use of it.

"Peter Turner, D. Physic.

"In respect of these circumstances, to speak like a physician, it were good for him, if it might stand with your honours' liking, that he were removed from the cold lodging where he lieth into a warmer, that is to say, a little room he hath built in the garden, and joining his still-house." *

Whether any improvement took place in Raleigh's

* Medical certificate of Dr Turner in Sir Walter Raleigh's behalf. MS. State Paper Office.

lodgings in consequence of Turner's representations does not appear, though the dreaded apoplectic seizure kept aloof. He stuck close, however, to his studies, borrowing by the aid of Dr Burhill, from the Hebrew, Syriac, and Chaldaic, all such glow-worm light as those languages throw on the world before the flood. His connection with the outer world became yearly less and less observable, until he, who upon the theatre of action had long attracted the whole world's gaze, shrank into an erudite recluse, exerting a visible influence little wider than his cell. Through accidental rents in the pitiable drapery of public affairs we catch a glimpse of him now and then, though of the most indistinct and unsatisfactory kind; as where Salisbury involves himself in a quarrel about him and his fellow-captives with the Spanish ambassador, or when James's queen's brother, Christian IV. of Denmark, seeks to obtain his liberation, that he may make him Admiral-in-chief of the Danish fleets. But these momentary glimpses obtained, the curtain falls again upon the Bloody Tower, and leaves imagination to picture to itself as it pleases all that is taking place within.

In the beginning of 1607 an attempt was made by the Government to obtain some new evidence which might appear to justify Raleigh's protracted imprisonment. The reader is already acquainted with Edward Cotterel, who, in the November of 1603, was sent to Sherbourne, where he seems to have gradually conceived the ambition of becoming a miniature Iago. Having contrived to make his whereabouts known to Salisbury, he was sent for to London, and instructed in the part he was expected to play. Lady Raleigh, it has been seen, had been permitted to join her husband, but under restrictions, for at a certain hour of the evening she had to leave the Tower. To be near at hand, she had taken a house on Tower Hill, from the windows of which she could see Raleigh when he went forth in the early morning to walk and meditate in the Lieutenant's garden.

To stand by the site of that house and look across the open space to the lawn dotted with copses which represents that garden, is almost to glance across the centuries that separate us from Raleigh. To this house and this open space came Cotterel in the February of 1607, in the hope of making some discovery which might further the design of his employers. Having behaved in a way to excite suspicion, he did not proceed directly, as an honest servant would, to the house of his mistress, but lurked about while Morgan and Saunders, two of Raleigh's domestics, went forward to learn what reception he was likely to meet with. Having been put upon her guard, Lady Raleigh refused to admit the traitor to her presence, and while he paced to and fro in vexation at the failure of his plan, she left her house, walked down the hill, and entered the Tower. Completely baffled, Cotterel was taken back to the house of the Chief Justice, where he made it evident that nothing criminating his master could be extracted out of him.*

If any proof were needed that the trial at Winchester was a sham, and that James and his ministers knew it to be so considered by the public, the reiterated attempts they made to obtain fresh evidence against the prisoner would supply that proof. Could they have brought themselves to regard the sentence as just, they would not have hesitated to carry it into execution. If they did not know, they certainly feared it might be otherwise, and hence their repeated efforts, the examinations, the investigations, the confronting of witnesses, the schemes, contrivances, and intrigues, resorted to in the hope of imparting some appearance of justice to their iniquitous proceedings.

The process of civilization in modern times has generally identified itself with those subtle contrivances by which the poor are made poorer, and the rich richer. In old times every city, town, and village was surrounded by its mark

* 'Examination of Edward Cotterel,' February 4th, 1607. State Paper Office.

or belt of common-land, on which the humbler classes fed their cows, sheep, and poultry; but in proportion as the political condition of our island divorced the mass of the population from military habits, social helplessness succeeded to sturdy independence, and the common lands passed from the hands of the poor into those of opulent proprietors. From the accession of James, these agrarian spoliations had gone on spreading and multiplying, till they goaded the people into insurrection, as was the case in the year 1608.

No spendthrift proprietor could look with a more covetous eye on the immemorial domain of his humbler neighbours than did James Stuart on Raleigh's castles and manors: having by the Winchester sham consigned the owner to paralysis, fever, and ague, in the Tower, he had for a while abstained from laying his hands on the property set apart for the maintenance of his victim's wife and children; but the growing necessities created by his vices now urged him to set aside his own act and deed, and plunder the captive of his property. The crown lawyers were therefore commissioned to scrutinize the instrument by which the Sherbourne estates had been conveyed by Raleigh to his son, and, as might have been foreseen, a flaw was immediately discovered in it. The Caledonian Antinous, by whose beauty James was now fascinated, wanted an estate to satisfy the cravings of his prodigality, and to gratify him, James had directed Popham to discover the flaw above-mentioned. To ward off approaching ruin, Lady Raleigh made her way to the palace, leading her two sons, Walter and Carew, by the hand, and entering the Presence Chamber, knelt before the King, beseeching him in most passionate language not to deprive those little ones of bread. James's reply was characteristic: "I maun hae the land," he said; "I maun hae it for Car!" The blood of the Throgmortons was fiery in Bessy's veins: maddened by injustice, she lifted up her hands to heaven, and scorning the tyrant's power, imprecated Divine vengeance on the plunderer of her children.*

* Carew's narrative in Lord Somers' 'Tracts,' ii. p. 454.

But, brutalized by licentiousness, the Stuart cared neither for heaven nor earth: having borrowed his ethics from Nero and Caligula, his humanity naturally took the same stamp, and he gaily proceeded therefore in his project of spoliation. Nevertheless, to blunt the sharp tongues of the Puritans, who took their morals from God, he devised, in conjunction with his lawyers, a scheme which he doubtless hoped would shield him from public condemnation. Sherbourne was worth five thousand a year—he would purchase it—what objection could be made to that? Not much, provided the lands were justly valued, and the purchase-money honestly paid. No land agent would have estimated the value of the Sherbourne estate at less than one hundred thousand pounds: James determined to give her whom he meant soon to make a widow little more than one year's rent—that is, eight thousand pounds.

Raleigh had seen enough of minions to know of what qualities their characters were generally made up, and might therefore have spared himself the humiliation of seeking by an eloquent and touching appeal to turn the edge of Car's avarice. In the interest of his wife and children, he would nevertheless try what potency there might be in words, and therefore wrote the curled and scented favourite a letter, which, persuasive as it was, he himself could hardly have hoped would weigh with a young profligate against a large annual revenue in gold. Among others, the letter contained these words:—

"For yourself, Sir, seeing your fair day is but in the dawn, and mine drawn to the evening, your own virtues and the King's grace assuring you of many favours and much honour, I beseech you not to begin your first building upon the ruin of the innocent, and that their sorrows with mine may not attend your first plantations."*

The affair of Sherbourne, which if related at length would make a little history of itself, went on spinning its dark thread of fraud and cruelty through the length of two years,

* Letter to Car. Works, viii. p. 650.

bringing lawyers, bishops, ministers, favourites, princes, upon the stage, but at length ending in the defeat of Raleigh. An old bishop in far back times had amused his sacerdotal leisure by composing a piece which he called 'The Curse of Sherbourne.' It was certainly a restless property, flitting from the church to the crown, from the crown to a favourite, from that favourite to the crown again, and so on by a zigzag route to the Digbys, with whom it became stationary.

Some incidents connected with its transfer to Car may be worth a cursory notice. When the chaos of Raleigh's affairs was shaping itself after the trial at Winchester into a new sphere, the Bishop of Sarum entered into negotiations with him in the hope of recovering Sherbourne for the church. He now opened a correspondence on the subject with Salisbury. It might not have been displeasing to this astute statesman to check the efflorescence of James's vices, which he could not doubt would soon throw him into the arms of some new favourite whose greed might prove no less ravenous than Car's. To soothe therefore the rapacity of that prodigal whose star had not yet emerged from behind the moon, Salisbury desired to retain something in hand, if he was not actuated by the wish to prevent the minion's wings from overshadowing himself. At any rate, he desired the bishop to transmit to him Raleigh's deed of surrender of Sherbourne to the church, and was informed in reply that the deed, being long, would take a considerable time to copy, but that if his Lordship pleased, he might command it out of the Records, where it was enrolled.*

This ecclesiastical episode appears to have exerted no influence on the main action; for James would not be diverted from his purpose by church or law. Commissioners went down to Dorsetshire to survey and estimate the value of the estate, and these, knowing what was expected of them, made such a report as suited James's views. Ere the prey had fallen into the minion's fangs, Prince Henry, who held

* Bishop of Sarum to Salisbury, Jan. 17th, 1609. State Paper Office.

Raleigh in admiration, and detested the injustice from which he suffered, went in a passion to the King, and dwelling on the strength and beauty of Sherbourne, entreated that it might be withheld from Car, and bestowed on him.* But if James had not given, he had promised it; yet, as he could not refuse the boon demanded by the prince, he is said to have satisfied Car's rapacity with the poor equivalent of twenty-five thousand pounds.

While Sir Griffin Markham, Raleigh's old companion in the Tower and Winchester Castle, was fighting duels in his shirt in the Low Countries, and learning that his lewd lady, having committed bigamy, was doing penance in a white sheet at church doors, Raleigh himself, under the direction of Nemesis, was forging additional links in the chain that bound him to Guiana. In 1604 James had permitted Captain Leigh † to attempt to settle there as in a British colony; again, in 1608, the same privilege had been granted to Robert Harcourt; and in 1609 Raleigh, without let or hindrance, despatched a ship in search of treasure, which returned towards the close of the year with a cargo of yellow ore, supposed to be gold. Had the conjecture proved true, Raleigh's imprisonment would have been of short continuance; but the ore turning out upon examination to be nothing but a species of ochre, the enthusiasm of the adventurers again collapsed, and Raleigh was left to proceed in peace with his History of the World.'‡

It seems highly probable that Prince Henry, who like his mother had warmly espoused Raleigh's cause, paid visits more or less frequent to the Bloody Tower, which led him to make the significant remark, that "no man but his father would keep such a bird in a cage."

* Somers' 'Tracts,' ii. 454.

† Captain Leigh to the Council, July 2nd, 1604. State Paper Office.

‡ Chamberlain to Carleton, Dec. 30th, 1609. MS. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER VI.

INTERCOURSE WITH PERCY, BEN JONSON, AND THE MAGI.

In the calm of a literary life, as it is led by a fortunate few, there may be inexpressible sweetness, the delight of creation mingling itself imperceptibly with the irradiations of future glory into the soul. It may be that Raleigh sometimes tasted of this happiness, the footsteps of which seem to be traceable on many a page of his 'History of the World.' But all such joys, like those that visit us in sleep, terminate in fruition; for when we emerge from the dream, whether sleeping or waking, the grim realities of life rush in resistlessly upon the mind, and compel it to renew the contest which identifies itself with so large a portion of human life.

At what Raleigh laboured we know, but we do not know how he laboured, or exactly where; for though the apartments of the Bloody Tower were appropriated to him, he walked about in garden and gallery, dined, talked, read, and perhaps wrote in Northumberland's apartments, which appear to have been almost as free to him as his own. When study became wearisome, he had his wife and two boys to converse and play with. Bessy was young and handsome still, Walter was sixteen, and little Carew between five and six. Accordingly, he had companions with whom to chat about the past, to whom to impart living knowledge, and principles for the guidance of the future; or whose pretty sports and lispings, by touching the tenderest elements of our nature, could from time to time drown the sense of pre-

sent evils in the over flowings of paternal love. There was besides nearly always a choice though small society to be found in the Tower, consisting of distinguished men and noble ladies, whom the jealousy or vindictiveness of power condemned to ventilate its chambers with their sighs, or to moisten its courts with their blood. Everywhere on wall and wainscot appeared the mementoes of guilt or suffering, affected stoical maxims, sweet expressions of piety and resignation, outpourings of love, or indications of blank and desolate despair; which, read by the dim light creeping down between massive walls, or glimmering in through small windows, could hardly fail, sooner or later, to bring the imagination of captives into dismal harmony with the character of the place.*

Time and the hour, which wear through the roughest day, bring us at length to the summer of 1611, when Lord Thomas Grey of Wilton once more presents himself to us, not proud and fearless as at Winchester, but broken and subdued by eight long years of confinement, scanty fare, and want of exercise. His case appears to have been marked by peculiar hardships, which originated in James's fears lest, if more liberty were allowed him, he might make some impression on the susceptible heart of Arabella Stuart. It is true she was now a married woman, but her union with Seymour being pronounced illegal, she was free according to law to enter into any new contract. In obedience to James's apprehensions of the frailty of his niece's virtue, Grey petitioned for leave to walk in the gardens before the ladies were up, though he could not be ignorant that the effects of his dangerous wooing might not be thus neutralized, since the ladies had female attendants, and windows to their chambers.

The other great state prisoners were not subjected to equal hardships: Northumberland enjoyed permission to

* Mr Hepworth Dixon, 'London Prisoners,' pp. 54, 55. Lord de Ros, 'Memorials of the Tower,' pp. 96, 97.

walk on the hill; Cobham had a garden of his own, while to Raleigh were allotted both a garden and gallery, wherein to stroll and meditate on the laws of the twelve tables or the decalogue, the Persian expedition, or the Punic war. Grey's mind, never perhaps very capacious, had been so dwarfed by captivity that considerations of the pettiest interests filled it. Under Elizabeth, James had called Cecil King of England in effect; he was still more so now, since he arbitrarily managed the affairs of the whole realm, while his nominal sovereign, stuck like an inanimate lump on the back of a horse, with his hat askew, scoured the fields after hares or foxes. To this King "in effect," Grey addressed his pitiable complaints. "In all my distress," he writes, "your Lordship under God is the sanctuary under whose shade I seek to shroud me." *

I have already observed that, throughout the continuance of Raleigh's imprisonment, the Court gave from time to time fresh proofs of its belief in his innocence, or at least of its doubt of his criminality, by reiterated examinations. Grey was hastening towards his dissolution, with his only sister lying sick near him; the descendant of a long line of Percies was losing his animal spirits together with the fine edge of his faculties; but Raleigh, according to the confession of Northampton, his bitterest enemy, still preserved that indomitable pride which, with a few occasional lapses caused by disease, accompanied him to the scaffold. From a half-naked adventurer, Car had now, for his feminine figure and portentous licentiousness, been made Viscount Rochester, and thrust occasionally between even Salisbury and the King. To him were subjected for wanton interrogation the most illustrious commanders and the highest nobles in the land, while a member of the house of Howard degraded himself into his tool. Having taken the sceptre out of James's hands, Car sent Northampton to question Raleigh and Northumberland, the latter of whom, after six years'

* Grey to Salisbury, June 26th, 1611. MS. State Paper Office.

imprisonment, had just been assailed with fresh accusations by a fraudulent steward. It is with surprise that we learn —if we can credit the witness—that, "whether by the distemper of his diet, or the disorder of his hours, or the disquiet of his mind, God knows, but I never found so great a change in so short a time, his conceit being exceedingly blunted, and his spirits weakened." Then, with characteristic vulgarity, he proceeds to give the minion an account of his next undertaking. "We had afterwards a *bout* with Sir Walter Raleigh, in whom we find no change, but the same blindness, pride, and passion, that heretofore hath wrought more violently, but never expressed itself in a stronger fashion." He felt himself, however, unequal to deal with Raleigh's arguments, or to describe his bearing, so breaking off suddenly he says, "But hereof his Majesty shall hear when the lords come to him."

For some exhibitions of atrocity, in the tragedy soon afterwards acted by Northampton and others in that State prison, the reader may be in a measure prepared by the language of this letter. For the administering of poison, for the application of secret torture, and other enormities, the closest confinement would, the writer knew, be needed, so he goes on to say, "the lawless liberty of that place, so long cockered and fostered with hopes exorbitant, hath bred suitable desires and affections in the braver sort of the prisoners."*

James's camarilla, flagitious as that of Tiberius, now restrained the "lawless liberty" complained of by Northampton. Up to this time, Percy had been served in the Tower by thirty-two attendants,† and been allowed the society of Raleigh, Ben Jonson, and the magi. All this was at once changed. Many of the retainers were dismissed,

* Northampton to Viscount Rochester, July 12th, 1611. MS. State Paper Office.

† John Bennett to Dudley Carleton, July 15th, 1611. State Paper Office.

the intercourse of the captives restricted or prohibited, while such other measures were taken as appeared best calculated to augment the evils of captivity. The fact is known that James's queen cherished a strong friendship for Raleigh, in which her eldest son Henry participated; but many documents which might have thrown a light on the progress and extent of that friendship have been suffered to perish. To her, as to his most powerful friend, he now addressed his complaint, both of the rigour of his imprisonment and of the King's refusal to allow of his undertaking a new expedition to Guiana. From the whole aspect of the times, which he had enjoyed ample leisure to study, he apprehended that James's compliance with his request might only end in misery and death; yet believing that the expedition he projected would promote the extension of our colonial empire, he still pressed eagerly for permission to undertake it. All offices of authority in the Government being still however in the hands of his enemies, he entertained little hope of success. "The desire that led me," he says, "was the approving of my faith to his Majesty, and to have done him such a service as hath seldom been performed for any king.

"But, most excellent Princess, though his Majesty doth not so much love himself for the present, as to accept of that riches God hath offered him, thereby to take all presumption from his enemies, arising from the want of treasure by which, after God, all states are defended, yet it may be that his Majesty will consider more deeply thereof hereafter, if not too late, and that the dissolution of his humble vassal do not precede his Majesty's determination therein; for my extreme shortness of breath doth grow so fast on me, with the despair of obtaining so much grace as to walk with my keeper up the hill within the Tower, as it makes me resolve God hath otherwise disposed of that business and of me."*

* Raleigh to the Queen, July, 1611. MS. State Paper Office.

I have said that in the friendship of the Queen for Raleigh, her eldest son participated. He appears in fact to have regarded him as the greatest statesman and commander of his age, and to have looked up with something like filial reverence to his counsel on matters closely connected with his personal happiness; for when a marriage was proposed between him and a daughter of the Duke of Savoy, instead of suffering himself to be guided by his father, or his father's official advisers, he consulted the prisoner of the Bloody Tower, and with respect both to himself and his sister Elizabeth, shaped his course by the advice he received. No fact in history is better known than that James and his wife cherished the deepest hatred for each other, and that, upon the whole, Prince Henry sided with his mother. To lean to and stand well with them, therefore, was obviously to be in antagonism with the King; so that Raleigh, even had no other causes been in operation, would for this preference alone have been regarded with aversion by James. He further incurred his dislike, by labouring to infuse into his son's mind feelings of hostility towards Spain, by which James was now strangely infatuated, partly perhaps because he thence received a pension of three thousand a-year* for permission to import English ordnance, and partly because he had already conceived the hope of obtaining the hand of the Infanta for his son. The Queen, meanwhile, stood secretly at the head of the French party in England, going so far as to grant private audiences to Marie di Medici's agents and encouraging Raleigh to wield his powerful pen in support of her views. The two short essays he wrote in favour of a French alliance, and against an alliance with Savoy, may be fairly looked upon as the basis of the scaffold in Palace Yard. In them he offended Spain past forgiveness, pointing out the heinousness of her policy, which he regarded as so little scrupulous, that it would readily, to

* Lodge, iii. 228.

compass a favourite design, take off any number of princes by poison. This stung James to the quick, and afterwards, when Prince Henry was commonly believed to have been so taken off, rankled still more deeply in his mind.*

Raleigh himself was about this time complimented with the suspicion of being a poisoner. His chemical studies and fondness for medical investigations caused him to be looked upon by many as a great physician, especially when it became known that the Queen, in a dangerous fever, had consulted him, and believed herself to have been restored to health by his prescriptions. Following the example of her royal mistress, the widowed Countess of Rutland, only daughter of Sir Philip Sidney, being seized by a fever, applied to Raleigh for medicine; but either because his advice was taken too late, or through not seeing the patient for whom he prescribed, the pills he sent were vulgarly believed to have caused her death.†

Raleigh's hopes and preferences, identical at this time with those of the Puritan party, centred in Prince Henry, whose fate, however, contrary to expectation, was more imminent than his own. For reasons the consideration of which belongs to history, the Prince of Wales and the King by no means lived in the harmony which becomes the relation of son and father. An heir-apparent has often in England, as elsewhere, a number of persons about him who call themselves his friends, and seek to show their attachment by blowing up into a flame every spark of discord between him and his father. Prince Henry was so surrounded, only in that case the nobler and better natures adhered to the younger because of his superior mental and moral qualities. Still, dissensions in families, whether high or low, are painful things to witness, and rather derogatory than otherwise to the actors. James was not a person qualified to inspire respect in any one, yet few could have

* Works, viii. 221, 237.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, August 11th, 1612. MS. State Paper Office.

withheld from him their sympathy when, accompanied by a scanty number of followers, he beheld his son on the race-course at Newmarket encircled by a brilliant cortège of nobles and gentlemen, who, elated by the preference of the son, scarcely deigned to show common respect to the father. James, who had not laid aside the absurd practice of maintaining a professional fool at his Court, where his presence was surely not needed, had his attention directed to the galling contrast by that silly personage; upon which he burst into tears, for which he afterwards made several of those who caused them pay dearly. The fool, on the other hand, met with chastisement from the Prince's friends, who seized on a suitable opportunity to toss him in a blanket.*

The rivalry between father and son was soon brought to a close. Agreeably to Raleigh's counsel, the idea of a Savoyard match was laid aside, and the Elector Palatine of the Rhine, whom the Prince favoured, and whose interests Raleigh had espoused, arrived in England as a suitor for the Princess Elizabeth's hand.† At this period the Prince sickened, and his malady having been declared by the Court physicians to be a fever of the most infectious kind, his friends, and especially the Princess Elizabeth, were rigorously kept away from his bedside. But the affection of the sister was not easily daunted. Repelled in female attire, she is said to have put on that of a man, and to have vainly endeavoured thus disguised to make her way to her brother's room. Almost in despair, the Queen now applied to Raleigh for that cordial which she always believed had saved her own life. The medicine was immediately sent, with a letter expressing the writer's persuasion that the cordial would prove effectual against the force of any fever unless caused by poison. The Prince took the medicine and died; which, it was thought, suggested to his mother the idea that it was

* Osborne, 'Traditional Memoirs of James I.' iii. 122, 123.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, October 22nd, 1612. MS. State Paper Office.

to poison he owed his death. This belief, however, was far from being confined to her. It prevailed so widely, and among those, too, whose opinions carried with them so much weight, that, in order to stifle their conviction, a post-mortem examination of the Prince's body was ordered. But the report of those who made it is of little value, since, knowing what was expected of them, they would not have ventured, whatever might have been their real opinion, to return any other than an exculpatory testimony.*

In the Tower itself a crime was committed which, at the time, sent a thrill of excitement through the whole kingdom, the vibrations of which have not yet entirely ceased —I mean the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. Into the history of this case it is not my intention to enter. Overbury, a man of some talent, who wrote mediocre verses and excelled in intrigue, had been mixed up with the adulterous connection of Car and the Countess of Essex; he had likewise contrived to get employed by the minion in a way less disreputable, yet not such as a man of high honour would have chosen—examining correspondence, and writing letters in the name of another. A quarrel arising between him and his associate, James was brought into the affair, and agreed to commit Overbury to the Tower. From that moment his doom was sealed. Car, now Earl of Somerset, put in play the most complicated machinery for his destruction: the Countess of Essex, her uncle Northampton, the Lieutenant of the Tower, with a rabble of conjurers, chemists, sellers of philters and other infamous persons, who aimed in concert at the prisoner's life. While Overbury, covered with blains, blotches, and yellow spots, was yielding slowly to the effects of poison, he experienced violent pains in the side, to allay which he applied to his fellow-prisoner Raleigh. Raleigh gave him plasters, not knowing the nature of the venom which was revelling through his

* Chamberlain to Carleton, November 12th, 1612. MS. State Paper Office.

system; the plasters proved useless: Overbury's body fell to pieces almost before his death, immediately after which it was thrust *like carrion*—the word is Northampton's—into a hole in the earth. Before the discovery which might, it has been thought, have delivered over Northampton to the hangman, the hoary assassin sank in agony to his grave. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no halter for him; for since the principal was cognizant of some secret, by holding which *in terrorem* over James's head he escaped the gallows, it would not have been possible to execute his accomplice; that is, if of noble rank; for the minor instruments were hanged without scruple.*

To the readers of history the Countess of Essex and the Earl of Somerset are well known, though some of the incidents in the latter part of their career have not been much dwelt upon. When, after trial and sentence, they found themselves in the Tower, Overbury's cell was vacant, and it was proposed by the authorities to appropriate it to his murderers. Her nerves, however, though proof against the horror of shedding blood, were not sufficiently tough to enable her to face the spectres and phantoms which imagination would have called up in the darkness in that dreadful place. In agonies of remorse and terror she therefore besought the Lieutenant to assign to her some less fearful lodgings, and Raleigh's apartments in the Bloody Tower being then untenanted, they were given up to her and her partner in guilt.† Car's apartments were at one end of a gallery, his wife's at another; so that, though they were sentenced to be separately confined, they might, as the doors were left open all day, be still said to live together. The concession, however, proved no boon, since their connection having originated in lust, not love, they now, the flush of

* Dr Rumbold, 'Works of Overbury,' Introduction. Amos, 'Great Oyer of Poisoning,' *passim.* Archbishop Tennison, 'Baconiana,' Speech of Lord Bacon.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, April 6th, 1616. MS. State Paper Office.

passion being over and the consciousness of crime mingling with their sensuality, regarded each other with aversion, and frequently passed their days in mutual recriminations and revilings.*

Beauty, even in a murderess, still possesses for some persons irresistible fascination. Northumberland now became Somerset's rival for the favours of the fair prisoner, whose conscience, by whatsoever recollections burdened, seems to have been by no means unwilling to add to the load; for when the wizard Earl detained with him in the Tower his daughter, Lady Lucy Percy, to prevent her from dancing Scotch jigs, as he expressed it, with Lord Hay, he found, as he might have foreseen, his assassin mistress endeavouring to corrupt her morals. It was to guard against a similar influence that he desired to keep her from her profligate mother; but perceiving he could find for her no safe asylum, he exclaimed, "The young courtesan is just as bad as the old," and sent back Lady Lucy to Court; where she soon became the wife of Lord Hay.†

* Sherburn to Carleton, July 25th, and Chamberlain to the same, August 24th, 1616. State Paper Office.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, March 8th, and May 24th, 1617. MS. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER VII.

PUBLISHES HIS 'HISTORY OF THE WORLD.'

In the year 1614 Raleigh, to the amazement equally of friends and enemies, published his 'History of the World.' To enter into a minute analysis of this work, or even to indulge in a protracted criticism, would be to go beyond the limits of biography. Raleigh's performance is *sui generis*, more remarkable for those portions in which the writer is not a historian than for the story itself. Nothing can exceed the grandeur of the opening, since it begins with God, in a strain of lofty speculation, as worthy of the subject as anything ever written by man: the reason of its brevity and obscurity, by which we cannot fail to be impressed, may be discovered in the temper of the times, and in the belief which he knew to prevail very widely concerning himself. What he writes, therefore, is rather suggestive than explanatory. God, he appears to have thought, being essentially a creative power, there never could have been a time when the universe was not; though the intellect of man has been always striving to fix upon some period when it ceased to be a mere idea in the mind of God, and began to exist, so to speak, outside of the Divinity.

If God be infinite, he not only fills and penetrates the universe, and clasps it round, so that, in the language of the Hebrew prophet, he may be said to hold it in the hollow of his hand, but regulates everything within it, intellectual as well as physical. We think, therefore, as well as exist in

God: yet if freedom of thought and action be a prerogative of our being, our immersion in the Divinity implies no restriction of that freedom; for with the idea of existence the idea of justice is inextricably linked; so that to give birth to all the varied beauty of which an infinite universe is susceptible, every being must be suffered freely to develop its intellectual forces in order to be responsible for the result. Closely connected with this question is that of the existence of evil. In space distances exist so immeasurable that deviations of millions of miles from the right line cease to be recognizable when compared with the space passed through in travelling from star to star. Nay, if we advance in imagination to the farthest star discoverable by the telescope, and look thence into the abysses of space beyond, we shall discover new stars and planets which never have been or can be visible from this earth; and so on in succession for ever: no end to space, no limit to the universe. It is the same with what we call moral good and evil. Let good be the right line, and evil the deviation: that deviation is so minute that it becomes imperceptible in the infinite protraction of the line of existence through eternity. In this way, if we may be permitted to say so, we may regard the evils which afflict mankind as of absolutely no consideration if we attribute to the soul an eternal duration, *a parte post*, as the schoolmen say.

Giving Raleigh credit, however, for much grandeur of thought and unshackled speculation, we shall yet find as we advance through his work proofs of narrow and invincible prejudice. There are luminous bodies in space which we call periodical stars, the movements of which are regulated by laws hitherto unknown to science. Apparently they move in orbits so vast as to defy calculation, and only become visible to us while passing through some small portion of their periphery, outside of which we in this part of the universe stand. In our intellectual world there have appeared some few minds resembling those luminous bodies

—vast, obscure, inscrutable—problems to be for ever studied, never solved. The list is short: Menes, Menu, Minos, Zoroaster, Lycurgus, Solon, Socrates, Plato, Mohammed. To these few men the laws, the institutions, the beliefs in religion, the theories in philosophy, by which the whole human species is governed, trace their origin. In the brief period of their lives they stamped their impress upon humanity, which retains it still, and will probably continue to retain it through thousands of years. Raleigh, predominated by the notions of the sixteenth century, contemplated human affairs from a comparatively low point of view, and misunderstood them accordingly.

Instead of treating the inhabitants of the earth as an aggregate of nations, grouped by their beliefs and languages into several families each independent of the others, he subordinated the whole story of the world to that of one section of mankind, curious and instructive in itself, but entirely distinct from that of other races. This is the fundamental error of his book, which lacks the freshness, fervour, and sublimity it might have possessed could he have freed his mind from the leading idea of his age, and persuaded himself that the Arabic race, though vigorous and influential, had limits set to its power and influence by other races, still fuller of energy and intellect.

Consistently with his scheme, and with the leisurely style of speculation prevalent in his time, he discusses and determines to his own satisfaction the geographical position of Eden, a fact thus sportively alluded to by Butler:—

> "He knew the seat of paradise,
> Could tell in what degree it lies,
> And, as he was disposed, could prove it
> Below the moon, or else above it."

All drawbacks however being made, Raleigh's history is a great work, sparkling with brilliant philosophical reflections and political truths. Contrary to the strict laws of historical composition, but fortunately for us and for his own

fame, he occasionally escapes from Tubal and Phut, Chedorlaomer and Methuselah, to treat of topics more germane to the interests of modern times; speaks of his wanderings on the banks of the Orinoco, of some incidents in his French campaigns, of coracles, and old countesses in Ireland; mixes up Prince Henry and Sir Philip Sidney with the Kings of Judah; dissertates on the defences of countries, inland and maritime, on poetry and conjectural history, on the state of kings and the evil fortunes of military men, on Don Antonio's expedition to Portugal in which he himself was engaged, and on several particulars of the Island voyage, especially the taking of Fayal, putting forward a modest defence of his own conduct.

These things inspire us with regret that he never wrote the second part of his History, in which he would have found himself more free to deal with characters and events; and that he would have used his freedom we may certainly infer from his Essay on War. There, though through no strict necessity, he sketches the history of the Papacy, from its starting-point to the period in which he wrote; remorselessly unveiling its policy and distributing severe censure on all those states which identified their cause with that of the popes.

Several writers have at various times attempted to deprive Raleigh of the credit of being the real author of his history, which, like the Iliad and Odyssey, they represent as a bundle of fragments tied together by one master hand.* The Tower, according to them, was a sort of literary factory, where poets, doctors of divinity, mathematicians, statesmen, philosophers, and soldiers co-operated in producing under Raleigh's eye a great composite performance, which when completed he illuminated and vivified with broad flashes of eloquence. This theory appears to me

* Disraeli ('Curiosities of Literature,' v. 233) advanced this opinion, which Bolton Corney ('New Curiosities of Literature,' p. 65) and Napier ('Edinburgh Review,' cxliii.) have completely refuted.

altogether unfounded. Ben Jonson, as Drummond tells us, laid claim to the history of the Punic War,* and other persons probably, after Raleigh's death, likewise took credit for other parts of the work; but I fail to discover in Jonson's dramas any modes of expression, any force of thinking, any vastness of conception, analogous to what we discover in Raleigh's elevated and masterly narrative. Able as he was, Jonson misunderstood himself when he sought to place his intellectual power on a level with that of Raleigh, which, had he lived two hundred years later, he would have shrunk with proper modesty from attempting. Jonson's style, though strong, is artificial, strained, and contorted; while Raleigh's, amid the greatest displays of nervous energy, elevation, and grandeur, rolls along easily and sweetly, with a murmur and a cadence like that of some mighty river in its flow.

Raleigh's history appeared at an inauspicious moment, when men's minds were too much absorbed by discords between James and the House of Commons to be able to bestow much leisure on the transactions of Jews or Gentiles. It was beginning to be suspected that an armed contest with the Stuarts for liberty must sooner or later be entered upon: the House of Commons rang with what were denounced as seditious speeches; James was told that Canute, when he had made up his mind to settle in England, sent back his Danes to the Baltic; and he was advised to imitate that tyrant's policy, to preserve his countrymen from a repetition of the Sicilian vespers.† For these and similar suggestions, Neville, Chute, Hoskins, and Wentworth were added to Raleigh's circle in the Tower. The moment, however, had not yet come for resenting the insults heaped upon the people's representatives; the four members fretted during a whole year in prison, and no effort was made to deliver them. Raleigh, Bacon, and many others, instead of de-

* 'Notes of Conversations of Jonson with Drummond,' p. 15.
† 'Court and Times of James I.,' i. 321, 322. Raumer, ii. 197.

nouncing James as an infringer of the privileges of Parliament, laboured to conciliate him by fulsome adulation, and met with ruin in the one case and death in the other for their pains.

Raleigh, however, proved but a clumsy flatterer; his language was too transparent to conceal his motives, and James, chuckling at his own shrewdness, only resolved to push still farther the humiliation of his great enemy. What Raleigh wrote on civil war was at once intended as an apology for the King's cowardice and for the nation's slothfulness and long-suffering; but in spite of his historical special pleading he suffered to peep forth here and there the great truth, that the sovereign power, by whatever forms, ceremonies, and glitter it may be sought to be disguised, lies inalienably in the people. In an evil hour he undertook the task of sketching a history of the conflicts that had taken place in England between the Parliament and the King.* He wished to subordinate in appearance his real to his pretended opinion, but failed egregiously. In spite of all his arts and subterfuges, his enmity to despotism glowed so brightly through the whole dialogue that lawyers, courtiers, minions, and all discerned it clearly, and on the very day therefore of its appearance the book was called in.†

During the whole period of his imprisonment Raleigh had cherished the design of fitting out and conducting a second expedition to Guiana, and had kept up at great expense his connection with that country ‡ by despatching thither almost every year a ship or two, for the purpose partly of prosecuting the search for gold ore, partly to keep alive in the minds of its inhabitants the expectation of his return. In 1595 he had brought back with him two or three Caciques to be educated in England, and, incited by

* See the original in the State Paper Office, Sept. 30th, 1615.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, January 5th, 1615. State Paper Office.

‡ To which he sent a ship annually, or every other year. 'Apology,' p. 52.

this example, his subordinate commanders brought over from time to time other natives, some of whom resided with Raleigh for a while in the Tower. Obviously he must have entertained the belief that James would ultimately relent and set him at liberty. His enemies were sinking one after another into the grave, or suffering the blight of infamy—Salisbury, Northampton, Somerset; while a new generation was rising at Court, not likely, as he hoped, to inherit the rancorous hatred of their predecessors.

Few inducements as Raleigh had had to form a favourable estimate of James's character, he still seems to have cherished a better opinion of him than he deserved, though not without many doubts and misgivings, which rose up powerfully at intervals to blast his expectations: almost everything he wrote, whether for the public or to his friends, bears indubitable evidence of his uncertain state of mind, tossed to and fro by incessant fluctuations — now buoyed up by hope, now smitten by despondency; now striving to think well of his persecutor, and now contemplating him in his true light as a cowardly, cruel, and treacherous despot. To this mental condition must be attributed the contradictions in his language and his conduct. He could not certainly know that James secretly intended all along to put him to death, whether he conceded to him an interval of liberty or not, and whatever might be the use he should make of that liberty. When, yielding to the seductions of hope, he gave a happy interpretation to the King's policy, his heart brimmed over with loyalty; when anxiety and apprehension took the lead among his thoughts, he shrank away from James, nay, even from England, and longed for some other place of refuge.

In this frame of mind he found himself when, towards the close of 1615, he recommenced his negotiations for deliverance with additional chances of success. Villiers had succeeded to Car as the object of James's passion, and the new favourite was surrounded by hungry relatives, who

would undertake any service for a bribe. By a felicitous coincidence also, equally rare and unexpected, an honest man had become Secretary of State—I mean Sir Ralph Winwood—who appears to have entertained, in common now with the greater part of the nation, a lofty admiration for Raleigh's genius, united, as was natural, with a warm sympathy for his sufferings. In James's venal court, however, virtue by itself exercised but little influence. To give its exertions full efficacy they must be winged with gold. Villiers, as I have said, had relatives needy and unscrupulous; and two of these, Sir William St John and Sir Edward Villiers, his uncles, undertook for fifteen hundred pounds to accomplish Raleigh's release and entire pardon. Only a moiety, however, of that sum was paid, and therefore the release was conceded, but not the pardon. It was believed at the time that Raleigh neglected to complete the transaction through the persuasions of Bacon, who represented to him that the money would be better laid out in preparations for his voyage, since the royal commission with which he was to sail would in all respects be equivalent to a pardon. But the story rests on too slender a foundation to be relied upon. Bacon, who with the other crown lawyers drew up the commission, would have seen that it contained abundant openings, through which fatal bolts might be aimed at Raleigh's life, and could not therefore honestly have given the counsel attributed to him.

The first step towards deliverance was to scrape together the money to satisfy the cupidity of the chapmen, through whom he was to purchase the King's permission to breathe the fresh air. At Mitcham, in Surrey, Lady Raleigh possessed a small estate, which she had inherited from Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, her father. This it now became necessary to sell, and it was accordingly disposed of for the sum of two thousand five hundred pounds. The deed transferring this fragment of the Throgmorton estates bears the

signature of Lady Raleigh between the names of her husband and son.*

During the thirteen years all but four months which Raleigh had passed in the Tower many changes had taken place among its inmates: Lady Arabella Stuart, with whose melancholy history the public have lately been made familiar,† had there, through her cousin's persecutions, terminated her life in madness, and her body had been clandestinely hurried away by night to be laid beside her grandmother's in Westminster Abbey; Lord Grey of Wilton, who had exchanged his puritanical stoicism for the poor-spirited solicitude of a half-famished penitent, had likewise gone to his account; Sir Thomas Overbury had expiated in one of its cells, by the worst sufferings that could be inflicted by poison, his connivance at the adultery of Car and the Countess of Essex; and many others of inferior note had shrunk into obscure graves, or been hurried to the gallows or the scaffold. Two captives closely connected with Raleigh's story still remained in the Tower—I mean the wretched Lord Cobham and Henry Percy. Much doubt hangs about several parts of Cobham's life, who is often said to have ultimately died of starvation in a miserable loft belonging to his washerwoman. Out of his estates, however, when they were confiscated by the crown, an income of five hundred a year was reserved for the use of their former owner, whom such an income would surely preserve from starvation.‡ It is doubtless possible, and indeed probable, that the money was never regularly paid, though funds he must have possessed, since upon his release he repaired to Bath, in the hope of restoring some degree of strength to his wasted frame. He returned, however, to

* MS. State Paper Office. February 17th, 1616.

† 'Life of Arabella Stuart,' by Miss Elizabeth Cooper. Her story is likewise told in a very touching manner by Mr Patrick Scott in his 'Legends of a State Prison, or Visions of the Tower.'

‡ Raleigh, 'Prerogative of Parliaments.' Works, viii. 179, 180.

London to die, and when he had paid his last debt, not to nature, but to James, his body, we are told, remained for some time unburied through want of means to provide the necessaries of a funeral.* Though he and the man he had ruined were so long inmates of the same fortress, it does not appear that they ever met.

Of the Earl of Northumberland, I may as well say now what remains to be said of him: he continued immured in the Tower till July 18th, 1621;† but captivity had neither softened his fierce temper nor taught him prudence; for in order to gall the Spanish ambassador, he used to drive about London in a carriage drawn by eight magnificent horses, which he doubted not the public would merrily compare with the Spaniard's "six carrion mules."‡

* Wynne to Carleton. MS. State Paper Office.

† Camden, 'Annals of James I.'

‡ Wilson says it was out of contempt for Buckingham, who drove about with a carriage and six. 'History of James I.,' 720.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELEASE—THE 'DESTINY'—PROJECTED SACK OF GENOA.

On the 19th of March, 1616, Raleigh emerged from the Bloody Tower, to walk once more through the streets of London, though still attended by a keeper. He was now sixty-four years of age; he had suffered from apoplexy and paralysis; his figure was tall, gaunt, and thin, his countenance emaciated; yet few faces were better calculated than his to command attention from the passers-by, or engrave themselves on the memory. Forbidden to repair to Court,* or to be present at any great assembly, lest he should awaken too much sympathy, his amusement consisted in roaming about the capital, gazing at the changes which thirteen years had made in its aspect, and to enjoy at the same time the unwonted advantages and pleasure of fresh air and exercise.

To arrange the incidents, minute but full of significance, that now crowded upon each other, is a task of no small difficulty, since Raleigh kept no journal, wrote no letters, and possessed no friend intent upon watching his movements and chronicling them for posterity. He was often invited to dine by Sir Ralph Winwood, principal Secretary of State, for the purpose of meeting the French ambassador, the Count Desmarets,† and other foreigners of distinction. Osborne,

* Sherburn to Carleton, March 23rd, 1616. Calvert to Carleton, March 25th. Chamberlain to Carleton, March 27th. MSS. State Paper Office.

† Raleigh told Wilson in the Tower that Winwood had also twice taken

author of the 'Traditional Memoirs of Elizabeth and James,' was once present, though whether at Winwood's or elsewhere he omits to say, when the conversation turning on Buckingham and other Court favourites, Raleigh observed, "that minions were not so happy as vulgar judgments thought them, being frequently commanded to uncomely, and sometimes unnatural, employments."* He likewise allowed the impression to get abroad that he believed Prince Henry to have been poisoned, which, entering like a sting into the minds of the guilty—if there were such—excited or exasperated their enmity.

The subjecting of Raleigh to the surveillance of a keeper implied a belief in the mind of James that, instead of organizing an expedition to the western hemisphere, the captive, if indulged with complete liberty, might choose rather to effect his escape, and take refuge in France. In this persuasion many keen-sighted foreigners concurred, among others the Venetian Secretary Lionello, who imparted to his government the conviction he entertained that Raleigh's chief motive in putting to sea was the hope of effecting his escape from perpetual imprisonment.† Strange circumstances hereafter to be noticed strengthen this view, though there are others which appear to demonstrate that, although the idea may have been always in his mind, he nevertheless laboured to reconcile it with the ostensible aim of his policy. Had he been guided by any other considerations, he must have passed with posterity for a fool. Bitter experience had proved that James held him in abhorrence, and would seize on the first plausible pretext that offered itself to take his life. Even could he have made up his mind to lie per-

him to Desmarets' own residence to discuss the business of Sir John Ferne's French commission. Discourse of what took place, 26th, 27th, 28th September, 1618. MSS. State Paper Office.

* Osborne's 'Traditional Memoirs of Elizabeth,' i. p. 33.

† Io so assai bene che da lui non é stata eletta questa impresa con altro fine, che di liberarsi dalla preggion perpetua. Lionello, di Londra, 11th April, 1617. Venetian Archives.

petually in prison, he felt that a word dropped inadvertently might any day provoke some of James's minions to obtain an order for taking him off. He never, therefore, even in his cell, could be sure that he was separated from a violent death by more than a few hours, and this conviction haunting him perpetually produced, if it did not justify, those effusions of servility and protestations of loyalty which grieve us so keenly during this portion of his career.

It would be putting forward a poor apology for Raleigh, to urge that his conduct at worst was of a piece with that of the King, whose behaviour throughout life was the reverse of honourable. At this very time, while negotiating the marriage of his son Charles with the Infanta, he was steeped to the ears in intrigues, out of which, had they terminated as he hoped, a war with Spain must have instantly arisen. As far back as 1611 the Duke of Savoy had instructed Count Gabellione,* his ambassador at the English Court, to propose a double alliance between the houses of England and Savoy. Against this project, Raleigh, at the instance of Prince Henry, drew up two reports, pointing out the evil consequences which could hardly fail to arise from the marriage of that prince with a Savoyard princess, or of his sister with a Savoyard prince. His chief objection arose from the belief that, as for many generations the dukes had been little more than Spanish satraps, nothing better was to be expected of them in the future.† The events of a few years, however, had reversed the duke's policy, and impressed a new character on Raleigh's views. The steps by which this change had been effected are too obscure to be confidently followed. The English Court had for some years been converted into a battle-field for simulation and intrigue by the ambassadors of France, Spain, Venice, the Netherlands, and Savoy;

* The first reference I find to this envoy in the State Paper Office is in a letter from Giovanni Francesco Biondi to Carleton, in which he says that the Prince's death having put an end to his mission, he was about to leave England. Nov. 26th, 1612.

† See the two discourses. Works, viii. 223 and 237.

each of whom necessarily cherished a different design, and sought to accomplish it by unbounded effrontery and lying.

How their schemes came to be interwoven with Raleigh's story we shall presently see. When set at liberty, his first proceeding naturally was to make preparations for his westward voyage: the belief prevailed, especially among foreigners, that he was still extremely rich, though had the public been aware of the fleecing processes through which he had passed, the idea would have been soon exploded. His whole fortune, estimated by the present value of money, would have fallen short of a hundred thousand pounds, which for one who had probably enjoyed half that sum annually will be allowed to have been inconsiderable. To realize even that amount he had to call in and put to hazard all the resources which he had up to that time reserved for the support of his wife and children. With indomitable energy, however, he began to draw together the elements of his fleet, and laid on the stocks the keel of his own ship, which he ominously named the 'Destiny.' A hundred noblemen and gentlemen,* with wealth at their command, and burning with eagerness for adventure, flocked to the standard of the renowned commander, the greatest that ever wielded England's power on the ocean. Through the influence of these gallant and noble adventurers, mariners gradually flocked to London from the different ports of Europe, eager to tread the deck with a commander whose name had been always associated with the plunder of Spanish towns and carracks. The terrible character of those mariners has been drawn with a dark pencil by Raleigh himself; they were, he says, a horde of sea-rovers, ruffians, blasphemers, male-

* Report of Spanish spy, of uncertain date, but written probably in the August of 1617, and Signed Vadervort. Simancas. He says, many gentlemen are going on this voyage, some of whom have embarked their whole patrimonies, and all the rest are men of brave and commanding aspect. Lionello says that Raleigh's ships were *pieni di nobilta*, Feb. 10th, 1617. Venetian Archives.

factors of all sorts, reckless of everything but gold, and the coarse pleasures which it could purchase.*

Raleigh's exertions, and the success which appeared likely to crown them, were viewed with a mixture of anxiety and rage by the Spanish ambassador.† Since England took possession of Guiana in 1595, Spain, ignoring altogether the rights of our countrymen, had vigorously pushed forward her explorations and multiplied her settlements, so that, relying on the extent of her injustice, she now claimed the country as her own. Leigh and Harcourt had excited little alarm by their insignificant attempts at settlement; even the ships which Raleigh had despatched across the Atlantic to search for gold ore at the foot of the Cordillera had occasioned no uneasiness; but now, instead of mining operations, Gondomar apprehended from the formidable character of the fleet in preparation that nothing less than conquest could be projected. His representations and expostulations to James and his Government were incessant and angry;‡ he insisted that such proceedings were inconsistent with those pacific professions which were constantly in James's mouth; and offered, in the name of his master Philip, to suffer Raleigh and his associates to explore Guiana for mines, and guarantee their safety, if they would consent to proceed thither with two ships only. But as Raleigh had always argued that Guiana belonged as a colony or dependency to England, he could not agree to receive from a foreign prince, whose subjects he declared to be intruders, permission to visit and examine the country.

Things being in this state, designs were secretly formed by the agents of several neighbouring Governments to blow

* 'Apology,' p. 3.

† From a royal order addressed to the president of the Council of the Indies, we discover that Gondomar had sent to Philip a full account of Raleigh's proceedings, as may be inferred from Minuta de Real Orden al Presidente de Indias, 14 de Nov., 1616. Simancas.

‡ Gio. Battista Lionello, Despatch of February 10th, 1617. Venetian Archives.

into a flame these sparks of discord between England and Spain. The first inkling of one of the formidable schemes then in agitation was obtained by the Venetian Secretary.* Having observed that Count Scarnafisi, ambassador from the Duke of Savoy, paid unusually frequent visits to Sir Ralph Winwood and Sir Thomas Edmondes, and was often favoured with audiences by the King, he set his penetrating wit to work, in the hope of discovering the nature of their business. His usual means of intelligence—that is, his Court spies and eavesdroppers—failed him now. The policy he adopted was bold and original: he went one Sunday morning for information to the Count himself, and commenced operations by talking of indifferent things far removed from the object of his curiosity. When Scarnafisi had been warmed into good humour by a masterly display of artful eloquence, Lionello told him plainly that he knew him to be engaged in transacting some important affair with the English King. Taken off his guard, Scarnafisi admitted that such was the case, but protested that it was of so secret and dangerous a nature that he dared not reveal it. The crafty Venetian still pressed, affirming that it would be as safe in his keeping as in that of the Count himself, whom by the most solemn oaths and promises not to divulge one particle of what might be confided to him he induced to betray his master.

Once in possession of Scarnafisi's secret, the Venetian, regardless of his vows and promises, immediately forwarded to the Council of Ten a full account of the projected enterprise. Nothing on record illustrates more strikingly the duplicity and faithlessness of James's character than this transaction, in which he showed himself false to his own

* In the Italian translation of Mr Rawdon Brown's able and interesting Preface to the Calendar of Venetian State Papers, there are some extremely curious letters relating to this portion of Raleigh's life, addressed by Giovanni Battista Lionello to the Council of Ten, and communicated by that Council to the Senate: the first is dated Jan. 19th, N.S., 1617; the second, Jan. 26th, N.S.; and the third, Feb. 3rd, N.S., 1617. Venetian Archives.

illustrious subject, to France, to Piedmont, and to Spain.

The position then occupied by Raleigh can hardly fail to excite our wonder, even at this distance of time: wherever desperate enterprises were projected, the thoughts of men turned to him as naturally as the magnetic needle to the pole. Denmark, the insurgent princes in France, the Duke of Savoy, the Republic of Venice, all desired to employ for their own behoof his matchless genius and daring. Common fame spread the report that, with his formidable armament then gathering together in the Thames, his design was to explore new worlds for the soothing and enriching of the English King. An attempt was now made to give a different direction to his fleet. Spain had long aimed at acquiring predominance in Italy, where, in pursuance of its aggressive policy, it had incurred the guilt of countless crimes and atrocities. Its entrance into the northern part of the peninsula had been facilitated by the Republic of Genoa, whose fleets and treasures it had made use of as its own, whose noble port was always at its command, and in whose treasury it had deposited immense riches. The Duke of Savoy, a man of Spanish blood, had inherited the ambition and unscrupulousness of his countrymen. The greatest navigator and warrior of the age was now at liberty, organizing a powerful fleet for some object not certainly known—could he not render him and his master, the King of England, subservient, for tempting considerations, to the policy of Savoy? His ambassador was instructed to move cautiously in the matter, at first, as if of himself. The plan he proposed to the British Government was this: to unite to Raleigh's fleet four ships of the Royal Navy, with as many as could be obtained from the Netherlands, after which the admiral should put to sea, as if bound for the western hemisphere; but having made a certain latitude, should change his course, enter as secretly as possible the Straits of Gibraltar, and sail directly for the coast of Piedmont, where he would be joined by the Duke's naval force. With a fleet

so powerful as he would then be in command of, he was to make a sudden dash at Genoa;* which it was not doubted he would carry by a coup-de-main, and so become master of all the treasure accumulated in that city, estimated at twenty millions sterling.

When this design was explained to Raleigh, he at once pronounced it to be easy of accomplishment, and expressed his readiness to undertake it, not however as a private adventurer or buccaneer, but as an admiral of England, with his King's commission in his pocket.† As in all such enterprises the possibility of checks ought to be foreseen, the allies thought it prudent to demand the aid of a few galleys from the Venetian Republic, to protect the landing of the troops necessary to invest the city should it not be carried by assault. It was rightly judged by Lionello that Raleigh would be gladly engaged in such a service, which might at worst afford him an opportunity of escaping from the hands of James, whom no considerations could move to relinquish the hold he had upon his life. It may be inferred, though it is not so stated, that Raleigh was habitually present at the deliberations of Scarnafisi, Winwood, and Edmondes, though never when the King was of the party, since his inveterate hatred could be allayed neither by policy nor thirst of gold.

* It may almost be inferred from one of the despatches of Desmarets that he had obtained some inkling of this project; for having insisted on the improbability of Raleigh's expedition to Guiana, he says, "Il est a craindre que le sommaire de ce voyage ne se terminast en quelque surprise sur les voysins." Then directing his glances homewards, he adds, "C'est pourquoi il n'y aurait point de danger ce me semble d'en donner avis à nos villes maritimes afin qu'ils y prennent garde," Dép. Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

† Sir Thomas Wilson, writing to James, Oct. 4th, 1618, says, "He (Raleigh) tells me also that Secretary Winwood brought him acquainted with the Duke of Savoy's ambassador, with whom they consulted for the surprise of Genoa, where they were sure to have had at least twenty millions of gold; and that the Duke of Savoy and Monsieur de Dignére were both in the plot, and that your Majesty was acquainted with the business, and liked it well." State Paper Office.

While this negotiation was in progress, the Prince de Rohan arrived in London* as the representative of the French insurgent princes, and had an interview with Raleigh, to whom he proposed the storming of St Valeri, which the league desired to possess as a port through which they might receive supplies from abroad.† This proposal also was laid before James and his Council, who had now therefore, according to the vulgar adage, too many irons in the fire. It may be inferred, from various circumstances, that James's advisers leaned to different interests: Winwood to Raleigh, whether he traversed the Atlantic, or attacked Genoa; Edmondes to the French princes, whom, before his departure from the French Court, to which he had been accredited, Marie di Medici accused him of favouring.‡

In the midst of this chaos of projects, James found himself incapable of coming to any decision. The wish to secure a Spanish wife for his son Charles, an alliance with which his fancy associated heaps of gold, at one moment induced him to lend a favourable ear to the advice of Gondomar; the next, his fears were awakened by the near neighbourhood of the Dutch and French fleets; then he was led to anticipate many advantages from affording aid to

* About the 9th of January, 1617, Monsieur de la Roche des Aubiers arrived in London from the Prince de Condé, then in prison, in the hope of inducing James to negotiate for Condé's liberation. The object aimed at, according to Desmarets, was to multiply the sources of discord in France. Dépêches, Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

† James, however, though at first he seems to have favoured this project, ultimately drew back. Explaining the motives of his foreign visitors, Raleigh said that "de Vicq came to him only for curiosity—Bonnvelt, to consult about the taking of St Valery, to have a port to receive succours at for the princes then in action against the King." Wilson, *ubi supra*.

‡ Edmondes had been Ambassador in France, and quitted the French Court in January. On his departure, Marie di Medici inquired, "Strettissamamente delle sue attioni, essendo S. Mta. stata avertita di diversi mali ufficij fatti da esso in prejuiditio del servitio Regio, et in favore dé Principi del contrario partito." (See Bon Gussoni, Paris, 21st Feb., 1617.) Edmondes was expected to return to Paris during James's progress to Scotland. Desmarets, Dép., Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

the Prince of Condé and his friends; after which the brilliant prospect of sharing in the plunder of Genoa bewildered his imagination.

Weak minds usually seek to escape from difficulties by delay. This accordingly was James's favourite course. He had been persuaded that he was a second Solomon, and now endeavoured to give proof of his wisdom by doing nothing. On the 28th of the previous July, Raleigh had obtained a commission, but not under the Great Seal, neither was the country to which he was to sail named, nor any pardon or promise of pardon given. He remained, consequently, as uncertain respecting his fate as he had been while in the Tower. James revelled in the consciousness that he could at any moment take his head, and persuaded himself that, knowing this to be the case, Raleigh would be the more ready to obey his orders. On the other hand, Raleigh understood but too well how his authority must always be paralyzed by the fact that everybody knew him to be a condemned man; a man who, in law, had no existence at all, and who, though nominally invested with the power of life and death over his subordinates, would never be able to enforce his authority. Again and again therefore did he labour through Winwood, and his other friends if he had any, to sever the chain that bound him to the block, that he might go forth to action a free man, with all the elasticity of mind which freedom gives. Nothing appears to have afforded the vindictive King so much delight as the knowledge that, by virtue of the unjust sentence at Winchester, he could murder Raleigh when he pleased.

Scarnafisi at length becoming impatient, reproached Winwood and Edmondes for what he assumed to be their procrastination, and thus extorted from the latter the humiliating confession that no movement could be made on account of the King's poverty. He acknowledged with shame, real or affected, that his master had been so prodigal

in the previous part of his reign,* that he was now in want of funds to defray the common expenses of his household, and that consequently nothing requiring money could be entered upon in less than two months. Scarnafisi replied angrily, that nearly two years had been consumed by fruitless negotiations, which now seemed likely to terminate as they had begun.

Edmondes omitted to state what Scarnafisi may nevertheless have known, that the King was just then meditating a progress to Scotland,† chiefly perhaps for the purpose of escaping from the Spanish Ambassador, whose importunities wearied him, though he could not consent to relinquish, at the nod of Spain, the chances of enormous wealth to be acquired by Raleigh's expedition to Guiana. As an indubitable proof of his reliance on this source, he contributed a large sum towards the building of the 'Destiny,'‡ since he most assuredly would not have done so, had he not been actuated by the *auri sacra fames*. Gradually the truth seems to have broken on the minds of Winwood and Edmondes that the Savoy scheme would have to be relinquished, for which reason they sought to deliver themselves from the arguments and reproaches of Scarnafisi, by sending him back on a wild-goose chase to Piedmont, with letters implying the confidence of the English Government in his integrity, so that the Duke might safely intrust him with any secret purpose he might have in view. The Count saw through their motives, and refused to stir. To render his journey of service he must be furnished, he said, with dis-

* Soon after James's arrival, Cecil observed that the expenses of Elizabeth's household had amounted to £50,000 a year, and that James immediately doubled them. Lodge, iii. 34.

† The French Ambassador, Desmarets, writing from London, January 12th, 1617, informs his Government that James intended to depart for Scotland about the end of March, and that he meant to remain during the whole summer in the north. MS. Bibliothèque Impériale.

‡ Warrant, dated Nov. 16th, 1617, to pay seven hundred crowns towards defraying the cost of the 'Destiny.'

tinct and positive instructions to settle with the Duke the whole scheme of action, the amount of the contingents to be supplied by the contracting parties, and the exact share of the plunder to be allotted to each. On this last point James showed himself profoundly interested. He demanded of the ambassador what security could be given him, that he should obtain his proper share of the riches to be acquired by the sack of Genoa; and was answered, that he might himself insure the equitable distribution of the money, jewels, and other property, by employing a force so large as to be overwhelming.

Whatever the motives may have been by which James was actuated, he gradually withdrew from the Savoyard scheme, of which, save a single allusion made to it afterwards by Raleigh, nothing more was heard. The project has been termed piratical; but, if so, James and the Duke of Savoy were the pirates, for Raleigh, acting under the authority of his sovereign, would have had no choice in the matter, and therefore could be by no means regarded as a pirate.

No foreign ambassador ever gave proof of so much pertinacity and overweening conceit, or exercised so powerful an influence over the English Government, as Gondomar. Imagining himself to be all-powerful, he often suffered his passions to betray him into the most unbridled insolence. Reiterating his arguments one day in the Council Chamber against Raleigh's undertaking, and dwelling on the disgust it must necessarily inspire in his master to behold his subjects and dependencies exposed to violence, the Council replied that Raleigh would go forth under the authority of a royal commission, by which his proceedings would be regulated, so that he could cause no damage to the subjects of Spain without putting his own head in jeopardy. Not satisfied with his reply, Gondomar abruptly left the chamber, but presently returned, bringing with him a book, in which were described the violence and rapine perpetrated by

Raleigh in his two former voyages to the West Indies, from which could be inferred he said what might be expected of him in his third expedition. Disgusted by the ambassador's presumptuous language and bearing, the Lords of the Council deigned to make no reply, but desired Sir Ralph Winwood to let him know that he would have done well to rest satisfied with the assurances he had already received, since it was settled by the King that Raleigh should go, furnished with distinct and positive instructions, which if he contravened it would be at the peril of his life. Such being the case, the ambassador was requested to give no further annoyance either to the King or Council.

CHAPTER IX.

SECRET INTRIGUES WITH FRANCE. SAILS FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

Want of money meanwhile determined all the proceedings of the English Government. A caricature found its way from the Netherlands to London, representing James with his pockets turned inside out, and a Dutchman inquiring of him if he had any more towns to sell;* alluding to his having given up Flushing and other places for money. To recruit his finances there were few proposals to which, however questionable, he would have turned a deaf ear; in fact, he is believed to have seriously intended to co-operate with France in intercepting the Spanish treasure fleet,† without previously declaring war; but French diplomacy was at that time extremely ill-conducted in England, where Desmarets was no match for Gondomar; otherwise it would have been easy to direct the proceedings of a Court, which a

* Lovelace to Carleton, March 11th, 1617. MS. State Paper Office.

† I submit to the reader a perplexing passage from Wilson's letter to James, in which he translates into his own vulgar language Raleigh's account of the plans he had formed in 1617 in conjunction with the Government. "That his first dealing with Captain Gage was well known to your Majesty for what cause it was: and his last at Plymouth about bringing French ships and men to him to displant the Spaniards at St Thomas, that the English might after pass up to the mine without offence: that for his negotiation with the Prince of Rohan and his brother, he confessed there was a purpose with seven or eight good ships to be furnished by the French to set upon the India fleet as they came homeward, or else missing it to pass on to the mine: and he saith, the cause that this succeeded not, that your Majesty would not let him go to the Prince of Rohan, having denied him before to the King of Denmark, who would have had him for his Admiral." Oct. 4th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

handsome bribe might at any moment have induced to espouse the cause of Condé and the Huguenots, of Marie di Medici, or of Spain.

But no consideration seemed capable of reconciling James to Raleigh, whose reiterated applications and entreaties to be favoured with a pardon before his departure proved unavailing. The history of his commision is highly curious. Two objects appear to have been aimed at throughout: first, to enable Raleigh to acquire, no matter how, a vast amount of treasure, of which James might take as much as he pleased, besides his fifth, as the price of a pardon; second, to word the instrument so as that no offence should be given by it to the Spanish Government.

On Raleigh's commission itself a great deal has been said; some maintaining that it was given under the broad, others under the private, seal; some that it was directed to Raleigh as "our loving and faithful subject;" others, that no such words were inserted in the document. It seems impossible to throw a satisfactory light on several of these points, though others are capable of being cleared up. How the document was at first worded can never be shown unless the rough draught should be discovered. The copy of the commission found in the State Paper Office has been conjectured to be the very one which Raleigh carried with him to the New World; it is endorsed, "Sir Walter Raleigh's Commission going into the south quarters of America, 28th July, 1616," on a sheet of parchment, and signed James R. Fancy discovers on it proofs of its having been carried in a man's bosom, for it is rubbed, crumpled, and stained with perspiration. Whether this be so or not, it was critically examined and approved by Lord Bacon, who, fearing lest James might either not read it at all, or if he did, not understand its true intent and meaning, after first writing at the end of the commission, "Exd. per Fr. Bacon," goes on to say, "It may please your excellent Majesty. This containeth your Majesty's commission unto Sir Walter Raleigh,

Knight, to travel and take with him into the south parts and other parts of America, possessed and inhabited by heathen and savage people, such persons as shall be willing to go and adventure themselves with him, with sufficient shipping, armour, horses, wares and merchandises as shall be necessary for their journey, as well for the better increase of the trade of merchandise of this kingdom, as by conversation and commerce to draw those savage and idolatrous people to the true knowledge of God. It maketh him also to be commander of those that go with him, and gives him power for the appointing of captains and officers for the better ordering and government of the company and the good of the voyage, and in case of rebellion or mutiny, upon just ground and apparent necessity to use martial law; which clause hath been used to be inserted in patents of like discovery and adventure. Your Majesty doth also herein promise in *verbo regio* that the said Sir W. and his company, with all adventurers with him, shall quietly enjoy all such goods as they shall import, which is desired in respect of *the peril of law wherein Sir Walter Raleigh standeth.* . . . .

"Signified to be your Majesty's pleasure by Mr Secretary Winwood.

"Fr. Bacon."*

Of this commission Gondomar immediately obtained a copy, and caused a translation of it to be made and forwarded to Madrid, where it is still preserved. Raleigh's situation was highly critical. He had drawn together the remains of his fortune, and expended them in the equipment of his fleet, yet he had no security that James might not at any moment consign him to irremediable ruin, by countermanding the expedition, throwing him back into the Tower, or even ordering his immediate execution. On these points speculation was rife in London; some dwelling on the extent of his preparations, others on the probability that they

* July 28th, 1616. State Paper Office.

would prove of no avail. The force under his command was variously estimated; some observing that he had six or seven good ships, with three or four pinnaces; others that his fleet consisted of twelve ships;* while there were those who maintained that it amounted to seventeen ships of war, and three or four transports, carrying, besides mariners, two thousand soldiers ready to be disembarked at the shortest notice on any hostile shore. Rumour however occasionally reduced the two thousand soldiers to three hundred. Whatever may have been the amount of his force, it was sufficient to excite extraordinary uneasiness in the Spanish Government, though certainly no way proportioned to the object said to be in view. Gondomar was indisputably right when he argued that so formidable an armament could not be needed for mining purposes, and might have added, that if James acknowledged Guiana to be a dependency of Spain, he had no more right to send thither one of his subjects in search of gold than Philip had to equip an expedition to Cornwall for tin. Throughout the delays and discussions that took place between Raleigh's enlargement from the Tower and the date of his setting sail, the subject remained involved in doubt and obscurity. One of two things should have been cleared up then:—first, was Guiana recognized by the British Government as a Spanish possession? Second, by what right did Spain claim authority over that part of America? Discovery, as it is called, obviously confers no right, neither does the preposterous ceremony of taking possession unless the natural lords of the soil freely give their consent. Before Raleigh's voyage of 1595 the Spaniards had doubtless made several attempts to force themselves into Guiana, but had been withstood by all the power which the Caciques could oppose to them; whereas, when Raleigh landed in the country he was received joyfully as the enemy of the Spaniards, and

* The French Ambassador, Desmarets, estimated Raleigh's fleet at ten or twelve ships. Postscript to despatch of Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

the native chiefs voluntarily professed allegiance to Raleigh's mistress, the Queen of England. In this transaction we may discover the right of England to regard Guiana as her colony. That in the interval Spain had intruded herself into the country, and thrown up a few straggling tenements on which she bestowed the name of a town, is true; but this had only happened through the remissness of James's Government, which should have watched over the territory bequeathed to him by that of Elizabeth. A thief has quite as much right to the watch he has stolen as the Spaniards had to any portion of Guiana. Whatever their language may have been, this was the conviction of James and his ministers, who evidently understood and intended that Raleigh should attack and expel the Spaniards if found where they had no right to be; otherwise why was he sent out at the head of so powerful an armament? The limitations introduced into his commission were mere delusions, since they who drew it up could not have been ignorant that there was not an inch of ground from the Isthmus of Darien to the southern extremity of Terra del Fuego which the Spaniards would not have claimed.

Another question now presents itself, the consideration of which is attended by more difficulties—I mean Raleigh's connection with France. It is a trick of historians to arrange themselves on the side of authority, and bear hard on private individuals, who in defence of their lives have recourse to the contrivances of a subtle policy. From James's absolute refusal to grant him a pardon, Raleigh logically inferred that he meant at some future day to take his life, and therefore determined to use all possible means to place himself beyond his reach. Hence his eager anxiety to bid farewell to the shores of England, and hence, as he inwardly argued, the reluctance of the Government to relinquish its grasp of him. Milton suggests that a part of the host of heaven followed Satan in his revolt through the fascination of his beauty; and many authors have thought that a large

body of English noblemen and gentlemen were allured to accompany Raleigh across the ocean by the dazzling spell of his renown. This, however, is taking too poetical a view of the matter; for although they might derive confidence from his distinguished reputation, the real loadstone was gold. To them, therefore, as well as to their great leader, delay was inexpressibly irksome. It afforded them no pleasure to see crowds of foreigners flocking to the docks to behold the 'Destiny;' neither did they regret the waspish enmity of Prince Charles, which led him to oppose the visit with which his mother proposed to honour Raleigh in his ship.* What they longed for was to find themselves afloat on the Atlantic, profiting by every advantage which the chapter of accidents might throw in their way, or tearing up tons of the precious metal from the banks of the Orinoco. Raleigh's faith in the auriferous nature of the Guianian soil was no less strong than theirs, but he had motives which they had not for secretly making many hazardous arrangements before his departure. Desmarets,† who met Raleigh at Winwood's table, as well as at his own, and was charged by his Government to enter into delicate negotiations with him, visited the 'Destiny' while he held secret consultations with its commander. In his ordinary despatches he alludes to this fact, but observes that he laid no great stress on Raleigh's professions; he forwarded, however, it seems probable, other despatches in which a different view of the matter was taken, since the correspondence that soon after-

* Chamberlain to Carleton, March 29th, 1617. State Paper Office.

† At what date the intrigues with Desmarets began I have not discovered. On the 12th of January, 1617, he was, or affected to be, ignorant of Raleigh's designs; for, alluding to the project against St Valeri, he observes that it behoved the seaports of neighbouring countries to be on their guard, since it was more likely that Raleigh intended to attack some of them than that he should really propose a voyage to Guiana in the belief that it abounded in gold. He thought him the first seaman of the age, and laboured, by dwelling on this belief, to inspire his Government with the desire to engage Raleigh in its service. P.S. to Dép., Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

wards took place between Raleigh and the French Government was in all likelihood conducted through him.

About the 21st of March, 1617, Raleigh took leave of Sir Ralph Winwood, and on the 29th dropped down the river,* where the consorts of the 'Destiny' had been impatiently awaiting the appearance of his flag. He repaired in the first instance to Dover, next to the Isle of Wight, whence, after a delay of some weeks, he sailed to Plymouth. Had the view taken of his preparations by Spain been correct, a different fate would have probably awaited him: his fleet was described as in the highest state of efficiency, supplied with provisions for a whole year, manned with the finest possible crews, and furnished with splendid and abundant ordnance. Very different, however, was the fact. The delays that had taken place, whether unavoidable or voluntary, had cleared out several ships of their provisions, so that while he sold his plate to supply the wants of one captain,† another rode back to London to obtain from Lady Raleigh the means of paying his biscuit-baker. Symptoms of insubordination at the same time made themselves visible; his crews were of the most disorderly and reckless description, for the mariners who had flocked to his service in better days were now either in their graves or too old and infirm for sea; their places therefore had to be supplied by pirates‡ and malefactors, and even of these there was a

* Gio. Battista Lionello, Despatch of April 14th, 1617. 'Venetian Archives.' Chamberlain to Carleton, March 31st, 1617. State Paper Office.

† Whitney. Sir John Ferne was likewise completely out of funds, and had to be supplied by Raleigh. Apology, p. 8. Ferne had embroiled himself with the associated French merchants trading to the East Indies, and according to Desmarets, had been arrested in port at their instance. Dép. Jan. 12th, 1617. MS. Bib. Imp.

‡ One of these, a Frenchman, born near Dieppe, who called himself Captain Belle, stole away from Raleigh at Plymouth, went to Rome, made confession to a priest there, and his story being thought likely to damage Raleigh, was advised to proceed to Madrid. There he contrived to have his statement laid before the king, who, in consideration of his extreme poverty, seems to have given him fifty or a hundred ducats for the fictions

deficiency, so that Raleigh found himself under the necessity of begging a small supply of seamen from the Prince of Orange.

Arguing the worst from these circumstances, Raleigh now determined to take all the measures in his power to protect himself from James's revenge in case of failure. That he was guilty of dissimulation I frankly admit, as well as that he had frequently been guilty of it before, since every profession of attachment he had made to James must have sought its excuse in necessity. Hatred of Spain had always inclined him to lean to France, six years of service in whose armies had almost made him one of her citizens. Philosophy had not taught him the duty of submitting to injustice and cruelty at home, rather than attempt to escape from them by accepting employment under a foreign Government. He must have excelled saints and martyrs in charity had he not repaid with hatred the merciless persecution he had suffered during thirteen years from James, his minions, and ministers, not one of whom had shown him the least kindness or sympathy, except the Puritan Sir Ralph Winwood. Now, then, he resolved to enter into a correspondence with France, not in order to inflict any damage on England, not even to avenge his own personal wrongs on James, but, if possible, to insure his escape from that tyrant's clutches.*

with which he sought to amuse him. The other French deserter, who called himself Captain Farge, lay sick and imprisoned for debt at Genoa. To these pirates Raleigh is said to have intrusted his letters to Montmorenci, of which, though they must have delivered them, since answers they said were sent, they yet pretended to possess the originals. Cartas Originales de Don Andres Velazquez y Don Diego Brochero á su Magestad, Feb. 12th, and March 26th, 1618. Simancas.

* Napier seeks, through the affectation of impartiality, to inflict the deadliest wounds on Raleigh's fame, by making it appear, though with apparent unwillingness, that he was guilty of falsehood and disloyalty (p. 242). He professes to have had before him four despatches of Desmarets'; but if so, it may be doubted whether he clearly understood them. Desmarets says that Raleigh's imprisonment was unjust and tyrannical: Napier attributes the remark to Raleigh. Desmarets relates that he saw Raleigh on board the 'Destiny,' but that because it was a place ill-suited for the discussion of serious subjects, he appointed to see him on the morrow,

As the affair was carried on with extreme secrecy, since Raleigh knew it put his life in jeopardy, few records of what was intended to be done have come down to us—I say intended, since the design never ripened into action. How or when negotiations were opened does not appear, though, as I have already suggested, the initiative was probably taken through Desmarets, who may have conveyed the intimation to his Government, that the great Admiral who had just escaped from prison, under conditions the most galling and terrible, would be glad to accomplish something in the course of his expedition to South America which might insure him on his return a home in France. Few particulars of the plan were in all likelihood committed to writing, all important arrangements being made for Raleigh by a trusty friend, who in the manuscripts is named Captain Farge.* The first communication we discover is a letter from Henri duc de Montmorenci, Governor of Languedoc and Bretagne and Lord High-admiral of France, addressed to Raleigh: in it he alludes to certain propositions made by Farge, highly advantageous to the King's service and the best interests of the country. In consequence of the benefits to be thus conferred on France,

clearly somewhere more suitable. He nowhere speaks of visiting the 'Destiny' a second time; yet Napier represents him as saying he visited it 'several' times. He speaks of a Despatch dated March 30th; the error is unimportant, but there exists no such Despatch, though there be one written on the following day. Desmarets himself commits greater mistakes; writing on the 24th April (13, O.S.), he states that Raleigh had then left the Thames five or six days: he had left it sixteen days. If he was as careless in facts as he was in dates little reliance can be placed on his statements. However, he affirms that Raleigh expressed to him his resolution to take refuge in France on his return from America; and this was true, though when pleading for his life, Raleigh, in conformity with the principles of English law, declined to criminate himself by confessing it until concealment was of no avail. Compare Desmarets' Despatches, March 17th and 31st, and April 24th, 1617., MSS., Bib. Imp., with Raleigh letters and examinations given farther on in this volume.

* If, as is possible, this be only a Spanish form of Gage, the negotiation must to some extent, and in one at least of its phases, have been known to James. See the passage above quoted from Wilson's letter of Oct. 4th.

he promises, in the King's name, to furnish Raleigh with a *brevet* or royal ordonnance, which on his return from the Indies would secure him a friendly reception in any port or harbour on the French coast to which he might be led by choice, or driven by stress of weather. Farther, in reward of the services which Raleigh undertook to perform for Louis, he was to enjoy in France not only complete protection, but was to be graced with high honours and distinctions.* Still as the *brevet* had not as yet been drawn up and signed by the King, he could only promise that it should be forwarded as soon as possible. Two days later the instrument, complete in form, but without the Royal seal or signature, seems to have been conveyed to Raleigh. This in the Spanish translation, which is alone to be found in the Archives at Simancas, is called a Commission from the Admiral of France empowering Raleigh to proceed with his fleet to Cape Blanco, Cape de Verde, Sierra Leone, Congo, and all the settlements on the western coast of Africa as far as the Cape of Good Hope. He is thence to cross the Atlantic to the Rio de la Plata, to sail northwards by the mouth of the Amazons, and the rivers of Guiana, engaging in commercial transactions wherever he may think proper, and preserving towards all nations in alliance with France most peaceable and friendly behaviour.† This instrument, less satisfactory even than that of James himself, Raleigh esteemed of so little value, that, as soon probably as it came to hand, he again despatched Captain Farge to France to express his dissatisfaction, and press for a more ample commission. He tells the minister to whom his letter is addressed that, although on the point of setting sail, he is still so anxious to be furnished with proper cre-

* Respuesta del Señor de Montmorency á don Valter Raly á acerca de alcanzar un billete del rey de Francia para quando estaria de buelta de su jornada para poder bibir en Francia. May 7th, 1617. Simancas.

† La comision que el Almirante de Francia dio a Waltero Ralefha, 9 Mayo, 1617. Simancas.

dentials that he once more sends his faithful friend to explain his views and prospects, and if possible to obtain a *brevet* from the King himself. He then makes allusion to certain ships, which, according to the arrangement previously entered into, were to be sent after him; and adds, that his trusty agent would point out the place in Guiana where he would be found working at the mines. In this communication he speaks with satisfaction of the changes which had just then taken place in the politics of the French Court, by which the Spanish party had been thoroughly defeated, so that there existed little probability of its ever recovering its former influence.*

To decide whether the above negotiation is to be condemned or defended, we must take fully into consideration the situation in which Raleigh stood, and the disposition of the English Court towards him. He seems to have entertained strong doubts of the success of his enterprise, and to have foreseen, though not of course with absolute certainty, the calamitous termination to himself. In other years, before persecution, imprisonment, malaria, apoplexy, and paralysis, united with the lowering effects of sixty-five years, had damped his enthusiasm, he might have spurned the idea of succumbing to the apprehension of death on the scaffold; but now, looking at its terrors from a distance, he quailed at the prospect, though, when the fatal hour arrived, no man ever laid his head on the block with greater magnanimity; still if policy could have warded off the catastrophe, was he not justified in making the attempt? "When they persecute you in one city," says Christ, "flee ye to another;" and the means of flight are left to the choice and judgment of the persecuted. If there are others who will decide differently in this matter, means are certainly at hand to afford a specious colouring to their decision. I regret that Raleigh resembled Themistocles rather than

* Carta original á Monsieur Monsieur de Bisse anc. conser. du Roy en ses conseil destat et privé. May 24th, 1617. Simancas.

Marcus Brutus; but I have only to describe his conduct as it was, though my sympathy goes with him even when he was undoubtedly in error.

On the 3rd of July the fleet left England, but about eight leagues west of the Scilly Isles encountered a hurricane, by which one vessel was sunk, another driven back to Bristol, and the rest compelled to take refuge in the ports of Ireland.* The 'Destiny' itself made its way to the harbour of Cork,† where Raleigh, we are told, greatly augmented his perilous force by taking into his pay formidable bodies of pirates. Here contrary winds detained the fleet till the 19th of August,‡ and this delay, caused by the elements, was, by his adversaries, objected to Raleigh as a crime.

Upon leaving Ireland, the fleet proceeded along the shores of France, Spain, and Portugal, towards the Canary Islands, and meeting by the way some French vessels, an incident occurred which led to considerable misrepresentation. Captain Baily, who afterwards deserted, seized upon a French bark, and would have appropriated her cargo to his own use without payment, but that Raleigh interposed his authority, and purchased the bark of its owner.§ On the 6th of September they made the volcanic island of Lancerote, where

* Chamberlain to Carleton, July 5th, 1617. MS. State Paper Office.

† 'Journal of Second Voyage to Guiana,' edited by Schomburgk, p. 177.

‡ The news, however, of his departure had not reached London by the 12th (23, N.S.) of September, when Lionello wrote that he was still in Ireland, adding that, "Si sia assai diminuita essendosi separati alcuni vascelli et partiti molti di quelli che vi andavano sopra." Venetian Archives.

§ Compare Journal, p. 179, Apology, p. 9, with the following passage from Cottington:—"The great complaint brought hither against Sir Walter Raleigh appears, as I am certainly informed, to be only for the taking of victuals from some few Frenchmen, and that so small a consideration as not worthy to be spoken of." Madrid, Nov. 4th, 1617. MS. State Paper Office.

Baily's account, drawn up probably in concert with Gondomar, is absolutely comic: "Having first cruized," he says, "all round the coast of England, in search of adventures and finding none, he sailed for Ireland, where he collected all that he could find in money as well as other commodities for his own use. . . . He took from the prisons all the pirates who had been condemned to the gallows; and whenever we discovered any

Raleigh's evil genius involved him in conflicts with the Spaniards. Only a few weeks before, a squadron of Barbary corsairs had put suddenly into Puerto Santo, and after plundering the place, carried off the whole of its inhabitants. When the English fleet appeared before Lancerote, the Governor believed, or pretended to believe, it to be the above piratical squadron, and drew together in all haste the forces of the island for its defence.

To augment his alarm, Raleigh landed his men, nine hundred in number, to "stretch their legs," as he expresses it. Upon which the Governor advanced at the head of his troops; but instead of assailing the English, detached himself, with one officer, from the main body, and came forward with a flag of truce. In like pacific mood, Raleigh, attended by Lieutenant Bradshaw, went to meet him; and, to the Governor's inquiry, replied, that he and his followers were Christians, subjects to the king of Great Britain, an ally of Spain, and that his sole object in visiting Lancerote, was to purchase provisions and take in fresh water. To dissipate the fear that they might be Turks in disguise, he referred him to Reckes, an English factor, then with his ship in the harbour, having just arrived with a cargo of wine from Teneriffe. From what followed it is clear that it was by order, not through craven fear, that the Governor lied and equivocated, while his people were conveying their effects to the mountains, for this having been done, he prevailed on Raleigh, by falsehood, to re-embark the greater part of his mariners; after which, falling upon the remainder, he killed two and wounded others. To avenge this crime, many of the English officers demanded permission to sack the town. In Elizabeth's time the proper chastisement would have been certainly inflicted; but, in obedience to the King's orders, Raleigh curbed his resentment, and, to the disgust

ship we pursued it as though we had been the enemies of all the world."

La Declaracion del Capitan Jorje Vayle que lo fue de la armada de Gualtero Rale, sobre su jornada y designios. Diciembre, 1617. Simancas.

of his followers, left Lancerote and proceeded to the Grand Canary.

His object now was twofold: first, to supply himself with the water and provisions he needed; and second, to prefer his complaint to Don Fernando Osorio, Governor-general, of the treatment he had received at Lancerote. As might be expected, some discrepancy is found between the Spanish and English accounts, though not so much in facts as in the view taken of them. Raleigh informs us that he forwarded to Don Fernando Osorio, by a Spanish fisherman, copies of his correspondence with the Governor of Lancerote, with assurances that he had it in commandment from the king, his master, not to offer any violence, or to take any places belonging to the Spanish King. Suspecting that the Spaniards in attacking him were only obeying the orders of their Government, he desired to be informed if such was the case. Osorio, with the haughtiness of an official who believes himself strong enough for self-defence, deigned no reply; but, affecting to apprehend that the English meant to storm the place, put his men under arms, and stood upon the defensive. Receiving no answer, Raleigh departed, and made for the little town of Maspaloma, where he landed a small party to take in wood and water.

Resolute in his hostility, Osorio ordered Captain Lorenzo de Torres to proceed with the troops under his command and prevent the disembarkation of the English, or, if already landed, to force them back to their ships. In this operation, approaching under cover of trees, they killed three of Raleigh's men, and took two prisoners. Torres, who performed this service, makes no mention of his own losses; but Raleigh, most honest, observes that Captain Thornhurst, Sir Warham St Leger, Lieutenant Hayman, and his son Walter, hastening to the rescue, killed three Spaniards, and put the rest of the valiant Torres's company to flight.*

* 'Journal, p. 182; 'Apology,' p. 15. Carta Autógrafa del Capitan Lorenzo de Torres à S. Md. May 12th, 1618. Simancas.

It would have been indeed strange if an English admiral, in command of a formidable fleet, should have borne patiently such treatment as Raleigh met with in the Canaries. The peace existing between Great Britain and Spain entitled him at least to civility, and the privilege of purchasing provisions for his money; but instead of a friendly reception, he everywhere encountered hostility and treachery. Profound irritation, bordering upon revenge, pervaded the whole armament, so that slight offence would have been needed to provoke a general massacre of the islanders. This was on the very eve of being supplied on their arrival at Goméra, for as they approached the lofty rocks that overhang the harbour's mouth, the natives opened their batteries upon our ships; to silence which, since forbearance could no longer be maintained, the contents of twenty demiculverins were sent rattling through their houses. The firing then ceased, and a Spaniard was sent on shore with a letter to the Governor, informing him that the English came as friends, exclusively for the purpose of obtaining fresh water, which, however, they stood so much in need of that it was impossible they could dispense with a supply. The proceedings at Goméra formed an agreeable contrast to those which had preceded. The Governor, a member of the noble Flemish family of Horn, with his lady, a descendant of the English Staffords, immediately accorded to Raleigh all he demanded; and their intercourse, though short, formed a pleasing episode in the narrative of Raleigh's calamitous voyage.

Of the particulars no correct information had reached the Grand Canary by the middle of the following May, since Torres, in his statement, then assured the King that Raleigh, having no money, obtained what he required in return for two brass pieces of ordnance. Quite different were the facts. Desirous of obliterating from the minds of the English all recollection of the insults and injuries they had received at the other islands, the Governor and his lady were profuse in their kindness and hospitality, not only permitting

them to take in fresh water in abundance, but loading them with the most welcome presents. To men suffering from the fevers engendered in autumn by the sultry calms of those latitudes, fresh fruits appeared like fountains in the desert; knowing which, the Governor's lady sent on board baskets of lemons, oranges, delicate grapes, pomegranates, and figs, together with loaves of fine sugar, manchets, and poultry. Raleigh himself, however, had begun the process of hospitality by presenting the lady with "six exceeding fine handkerchiefs and six pair of gloves," writing to her at the same time, that if there were anything worthy of her in his fleet, she should command it and him. To the above were added, as a parting gift, two ounces of ambergris, an ounce of the delicate extract of amber, a large glass of rose-water in high estimation there, with a very excellent picture of Mary Magdalene, and a cutwork cuff.

In testimony of the friendly intercourse which had taken place between the English and the inhabitants of Goméra, the Governor intrusted Raleigh with a letter to the Spanish ambassador in London, in which he spoke in the highest terms of the Admiral's pacific and honourable bearing.

On his departure from Goméra, Raleigh pursued a south-westerly course, through a succession of sultry calms, squalls, and storms. Disease soon broke forth in the fleet, and day after day fresh victims were sewn up in their shrouds and committed to the deep. On board the 'Destiny' alone forty-two persons died, and among them some of Raleigh's nearest and dearest kin. Describing to his wife what he suffered, he says:—"Sweetheart, I can write unto you but with a weak hand, for I have endured the most violent calenture for fifteen days that ever man did and lived . . . . Remember my service to my Lord Carew and Mr Secretary Winwood. I write not to them, for I can write of nought but miseries." *

As the adventurers proceeded, gorgeous rainbows threw

* Works, viii. 630, 631.

their arches over the ocean, and all the splendour of the Southern sky burst upon them. One evening, about eight o'clock, they caught the first glimpse of the Magellanic Clouds, vast concentric circles of pink and opalescent stars, resembling, from their countless multitude, a portion of the Milky Way, and constituting the most splendid and mysterious phenomenon in the heavens.*

On the 11th of November he reached Guiana, and experienced some slight improvement in health, partly through the influence of the land-breeze, partly from the refreshing fruits which two caciques who had been with him in the Tower sent on board. His hopes being still unquenched, he now strove, by their aid, to banish the recollection of his sufferings as he drifted down slowly towards the Orinoco, between clusters of islands, on one of which Defoe has laid the scene of Robinson Crusoe.

* Sir John Herschel's 'Astronomy,' 895.

CHAPTER X.

MACHINATIONS OF HIS ENEMIES AT HOME.

The above, though brief, is a faithful account of Raleigh's proceedings in the Canary Islands: it will now be necessary to consider the effects produced in Great Britain and Spain by those transactions.

One of the principal actors in this part of the Raleigh drama was the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, a man of audacious and turbulent spirit, devoured by self-conceit and animated by an inconceivable hatred of Raleigh. According to his own representations to Philip he constituted the central figure at the English Court, about which everything revolved, king, favourite, and ministers. Next to Raleigh, Winwood was the chief mark against which his rancour directed itself, which, if we may credit his own statement, terminated in the humiliation and death of his victim. When a Spaniard hates, he seldom does it by halves. Gondomar at any rate would have realized Johnson's idea of a good hater, and, like Hobbes and Shakespeare, might have put the question—

"Hates any man the thing he would not kill?"

When intelligence reached England from Lancerote, Gondomar made a simultaneous attack on the weakness of James, and the vindictiveness of Philip. Nothing occupied the mind of the former but field-sports and the craving after gold, which involved him in the meshes of Spain, because he viewed the marriage of Charles with the Infanta, Donna

Maria, in no other light than as a wicket leading into the treasury of El Dorado. A man of discernment would long ere this have seen through the delusion; but James was not a man of discernment, and accordingly suffered himself to be tossed to and fro like a tennis-ball by the agents of the Escorial. In the autumn of 1617 the great business at Court was the appointment of commissioners to treat of the marriage, and Winwood, we are assured, desired to be one of the number. As James thought him qualified to be Secretary of State, he could have felt no objection to gratify the minister's wish, if the repugnance of Gondomar could be subdued. Winwood, therefore, it is said, endeavoured, through the intervention of Buckingham and his mother, to blunt the edge of the Spaniard's animosity; but instead of succeeding, only exasperated his malignity. Persevering in season and out of season in exciting James's wrath by dwelling on the acts of piracy of which he accused Raleigh, Gondomar not only succeeded in causing his fictions to be accepted for facts, but turned the tide of royal resentment so fiercely against Winwood, that through vexation he was thrown into a burning fever, which carried him off in a few days. As fevers were then often produced by artificial means, especially by Rome and Spain, and as the post-mortem examination of Winwood's body pointed to such an inference, it may not be too uncharitable to suspect that James's supposed indignation was not the main source of Winwood's malady.

I have already alluded to the fact that Captain Baily, though, as he says, he had invested his whole fortune in Raleigh's enterprise, deserted from the fleet at Lancerote, and returned to spread through England calumnious rumours against his commander. Was it through cowardice that he acted thus, or had doubloons or pieces of eight anything to do with his desertion? It is certain that he enjoyed the sympathy and support of Gondomar, who, when he drew up a slanderous declaration, full of falsehoods against Raleigh,

caused a translation to be made of it into Spanish, which I have now before me, and appears to have vouched to his Government for its accuracy. There were, however, some awkward circumstances opposed to Baily's success; the crew of his own ship gave the lie to his accusations, for which reason he evinced much reluctance to make his appearance in London; and when at length he repaired thither, and was subjected to examination by the Privy Council, his evidence broke down, and he was committed to the Gatehouse for desertion and calumny against his General, though of these facts not a whisper appears to have been wafted to Madrid.

Gondomar's next move was to embarrass the English Government, and betray the nation into hostility towards Raleigh, by putting a sudden stop to our commerce with Spain. With intemperate haste he forwarded to Philip terrible accounts of Raleigh's excesses in the Canary Islands, where he was accused of committing every kind of atrocity; nay, so audacious it was said had he grown in his wickedness that, writing to the Earl of Southampton, he not only boasted of his crimes, but frankly proclaimed his intention of stationing himself in the group to intercept the American fleet on its way to Spain.

When these representations were laid before the Council of State at Madrid they occasioned an important debate, at which, after the lapse of two hundred and fifty years, we may almost imagine ourselves present. The old Council Chamber is no longer standing, having been pulled down in the eighteenth century, when the present unrivalled palace was erected by an Italian architect. In accordance, however, with the taste of the age, of which we may form a just conception from several ancient buildings, the apartment was spacious and gloomy, with which the costume and grave bearing of the councillors were in harmony. The question under consideration being whether or not it were advisable to lay on all English vessels at Seville the em-

bargo recommended by Gondomar, the Duque del Infantado opened the discussion by advocating the views of the ambassador.

He said that since the Conde de Gondomar, a man of prudence and discretion, was the moving spirit in the whole matter, he could not reject the counsel he gave to his Majesty respecting the embargo. No fear need be entertained that it would interrupt the peace existing between the two countries, or lead to any other sinister consequences, because, with the experience he had acquired by a long residence in England, the ambassador would have been withheld from giving such advice had there been any danger to be feared. At the same time the Chief Justice of Seville should be commanded to observe great caution in carrying out the measure, so that no injury might be inflicted on individuals or any damage sustained by property. Simultaneously with these proceedings notice ought to be given to the English ambassador at Madrid and forwarded to Gondomar in England, in order that, being acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, he might be able to ward off untoward consequences.

Don Agustin Mesia observed that he would willingly adopt the policy of the Conde de Gondomar, but was deterred by considering that the only news hitherto received of the said Walter Raleigh was that his fleet had touched at Lancerote; but it was not known that he had committed any damage, and until news to such effect should be obtained, he would oppose the embargo.

The Marquis de la Laguna argued in favour of the measure proposed by Gondomar, and improving upon his policy, recommended that the embargo should be extended to the other ports of Spain as well as Seville.

Philip's confessor spoke next, declaring that he agreed entirely with Gondomar, and that as a point of conscience he should feel more scruple in abstaining from offering such advice to his Majesty than sorrow for giving it; because it

was evident that Gondomar was acquainted with Raleigh's proceedings, and knew of the letter he had written to the Earl of Southampton, stating that he meant to station himself at the Canaries for the purpose of intercepting the homeward-bound fleet. He then referred to Captain Baily's declaration, which, agreeing, he said, with the advices received from Lancerote, inclined him to put faith in his whole story. Having advanced clearly thus far, the confessor's ideas became confused, so that he mingled facts and fictions strangely together. Being ignorant that Baily had been sent to prison for his statement, he took advantage of his own ignorance, and contended that he would have been punished in England if his story had been false, especially as Lady Raleigh and her friends made loud complaints against his report.

Don Baltasar de Zuniga closed the debate with a brief but convincing speech; since no harm, he said, could arise from delay, it might be as well to observe proper forms in laying on the embargo. Instructions should be sent to the Chief Justice of Seville, and the other authorities there, directing them to inform themselves minutely of the damage that Walter had done in the island of Lancerote, or in others of the Canaries, of which doubtless there would be in Seville very particular news; and upon this investigation he thought it might be well to have recourse to an embargo; but he did not consider it very probable that Raleigh, being so good a seaman, and having with him so many who were the same, should be waiting in the Canary Islands for our fleet to come from the Indies, since on the voyage out they pass near the Canaries, but on their return take a route very distant from them.*

A report of this discussion having been laid before Philip, he appears to have considered the arguments for and against the embargo, and to have been swayed by the advice

* Minuta de consulta del consejo de estado 7 de Diciembre, 1617. Simancas.

of Zuniga to postpone action to inquiry. Instructions were accordingly sent to the Chief Justice of Seville,* directing him to examine with secrecy and despatch the grounds of the rumours circulated against Raleigh, that the King might be put in possession of accurate information. As no such information existed at Seville, the Chief Justice applied to Don Fernando Osorio, Governor-general of the Canaries, who directed Lorenzo de Torres to draw up a report containing the particulars of Raleigh's visit, to which I have already referred.†

If the Spanish Government and most of its agents exhibited the dignity of sluggishness, Gondomar could by no means be complimented for the same virtue. His hatred of Raleigh urged him to sleepless vigilance; his letters, despatches, representations, may be said to have trodden on each other's heels through the eagerness of their author to compass the destruction of the great Englishman. To this end the juggle of the Spanish match was skilfully protracted, and while Gondomar dwelt secretly on the reports of Raleigh's misdoings which he himself had fabricated, he eschewed speaking openly on the subject, because several members of the English Council who remembered the vehemence with which he had opposed Raleigh's departure suspected his designs.‡

For some time there was a lull in the storm of persecution, because no intelligence reached England which might seem to justify its continuance. Still, Gondomar and the Secretary Ulloa supplied Philip and the Council of State with irritating reports, in the hope of producing an embargo, by which they trusted that James's anger against Raleigh might be blown into a flame. They were very con-

* Real despacho al asistente de Sevilla, 27 de Diciembre, 1617. Simancas.

† Carta Autografa del Capitan Lorenzo de Torres, 12 de Mayo, 1618. Simancas.

‡ Parrafo de una carta del Conde de Gondomar à S. Md., 30th de Diciembre, 1617. Simancas.

fident, however, that he would secretly have felt little regret for the interruption of commerce, since it would have seemed to justify the punishment of those who had urged him to permit Raleigh's departure entirely against his own conviction. Sir John Digby, English ambassador at Madrid, ranked among the foremost of Raleigh's enemies, and by his despatches exasperated James's hostility, of which he artfully represented his own dislike to be only an echo.

While the above correspondence was in progress, Captain Alley, who left Guiana on the 14th of November, landed in England.

Before the contents of his letters could be known, the bare announcement that he came from Raleigh sufficed to awaken public enthusiasm. In our own day the discovery of a new gold-field is hailed with rapture, because all persons secretly expect to derive some mysterious advantage from it. Far more widely spread was this extravagant expectation in Raleigh's day, so that Captain Alley, had his nervous system been of the toughest, might have been thrown into a vertigo by the babel of inquiries in the midst of which he found himself. Instead, however, of rendering more intense the fever of cupidity, the intelligence he brought was well calculated to allay it. He no doubt related that Raleigh was in Guiana, moving inland towards the mines; but from the sufferings and loss of life encountered on the voyage, reflecting persons augured unfavourably of the whole enterprise. Yet there were those who retained their original faith, and expected the speedy arrival of other messengers to announce the acquisition of untold treasures.

Meanwhile the Spanish Government more than participated the harassing uncertainty experienced by James. Gondomar, indeed, though encouraged by Philip to persevere in the course he was pursuing in England, felt his ardour somewhat damped at being told by his king that though Raleigh had indeed landed in the Canaries, he went

his way without inflicting any damage on the islands.*

The ground of apprehension was then suddenly shifted; now the news reached Madrid that the great Corsair had been beheld passing by San Domingo, towards Guiana and Trinidad, with fourteen ships of war;† and now it was confidently affirmed that he contemplated the taking of Marguereta or Jamaica, where, being a fugitive from England, he intended to establish himself, and by offering an asylum to the sea-rovers and buccaneers of all nations, to aim at sovereign power.

Some of these reports originated with a French pirate, who in Spain called himself Captain Belle, and said he was a native of Dieppe. According to his statement, he had been known to Raleigh for six or seven years, and, in conjunction with Captain Farge, had been employed by him in conveying letters to and from France. Though a pirate, however, he cherished all the scruples of a good Catholic, and deserted treacherously from Raleigh's fleet, because he disliked the society of Huguenots. To purify himself from the taint acquired by an intimacy of six or seven years, he repaired to the great sink of Christendom, Rome, where he confessed his sins—which were doubtless numerous—and received absolution; but his confessor, instead of enjoining amendment of life, counselled new acts of guilt. Hastening with the papers he had stolen to Madrid, he was there to betray his former master. Following the directions of the priest, he passed over into Spain, and on reaching the capital, told his story to Don Andres de Velazquez, who repeated it to the King.‡ As the ex-pirate was in a poor plight, Velazquez thought it probable that his disclosure might be a fiction, especially as he prayed to be favoured with a hundred crowns, though he offered to remain as a

* Real despacho al Conde de Gondomar, 9th de Feb., 1618. Simancas.

† Despatch of Piero Gritti, May 30th, 1618. Venetian Archives.

‡ Carta Autografa de Don Andres de Velazquez al Rey, 12 de Feb., 1618. Simancas.

hostage till the truth of his statement could be inquired into. Philip gave him the money, and referred his examination to Don Diego Brochero, who appears to have conducted it with intelligence and fidelity. Belle admitted to him that in parting with Raleigh he had been guilty of treachery; for being at Plymouth, he and Captain Farge informed the Admiral that some officers of their acquaintance were getting ready at Dieppe and Havre four or five ships to join him in Guiana, but would wait until they received directions from him and Farge. Believing what they said, Raleigh gave them a written description of the route they were to follow, together with a chart of navigation in order that they might find him with more certainty. That both Belle and Farge intended from the first to betray Raleigh is clear from the fact that they opened the packets they were engaged to convey to and from France, and made transcripts of the enclosed letters, copies of which now lie before me. Both the miscreants afterwards met with their deserts, for Belle reached Madrid in the condition of a beggar, while Farge seems to have rotted in jail at Genoa, where he was imprisoned for debt.*

It has been often affirmed that Raleigh himself believed in the existence of no mines in Guiana, or believed it without any ground and in opposition to the testimony of all well-informed persons; but Gondomar and his secretary, who ought surely to have possessed exact information, entertained no doubt respecting the existence of those mines. They were fully persuaded, however, that through the arrangements made by the Spanish Government, Raleigh's enterprise would end in disaster.†

To this statement of Ulloa another, conceived in the same spirit, was soon afterwards added by Gondomar, who concluded rightly enough that the chances of failure were

* Carta de Don Diego Brochero sobre asuntos de Gualtero, 20 de Marzo, 1618. Simancas.

† Don Sanchez de Ulloa à Ciriza, Feb., 1618. Simancas.

multiplying fast about Raleigh. His letters occasionally, from being wanting in names, dates, and circumstantial details, suggest the suspicion that he often amused his Catholic Majesty with fictions of his own invention. Just at this juncture a ship arrived quite *à propos* at Portsmouth, bringing about Raleigh's proceedings news so strange that it reads like an extract from Sir John Mandeville. Having lost on the voyage many of his best men, the master of the 'Destiny' among others, he missed the mouth of the Orinoco, and entered a port where the current ran inland with such force that it would be a work of much difficulty to sail out again. Suspecting the designs of his officers, Raleigh, it was said, seized and opened the letters they had written to England, through which he discovered the general disaffection existing in his fleet, and the resolution *all* had formed, if their condition did not speedily improve, to cast their Admiral into the sea, and return to England. When Raleigh ordered one of the most violent of these prophets to be placed under arrest, the mariners refused to obey his commands; so that it was obvious nothing but disappointment and calamity was to be looked for. Gondomar himself still clung to the belief he had entertained from the beginning, that Raleigh's crews would turn pirates; and this persuasion appears to have been shared by several other persons.*

* Carta del Conde de Gondomar à su Majestad, 26 de Marzo, 1618. Simancas.

CHAPTER XI.

HIS GOLDEN VISION IS DISPELLED.

If facts and events could, in spite of reason, establish the doctrine of fatality, I might suspect that the Three Sisters had now clutched Raleigh in their inextricable grasp, since everything he planned or did shaped itself into a means of destruction. Whatever enthusiasm or buoyancy survived in the fleet connected itself with his person, so that where he led all would fearlessly follow, and in the surge of their valour bear down everything before them. Conscious of this, and that success in his enterprise was synonymous with life, he was yet, through the prostration produced by sickness, constrained to relinquish the lead to another.

Owing to the insufficient depth of water on the bar, it was found impracticable to force the larger ships into the river, on which account the 'Destiny' and its bulky consorts remained cruising between the mouth of the Orinoco and the island of Trinidad, under the command of Raleigh, who through weakness had to be carried from one place to another in a chair; while five of the smaller vessels, with a considerable force of soldiers and mariners, ascended the river under the command of Kemys and young Raleigh.

The fact having transpired that the Spaniards had reinforced all their settlements in Guiana, the party under Kemys would hardly have ventured inland had not Raleigh remained on the coast to prevent their retreat from the

country being cut off by the arrival of a fleet with fresh troops from other parts of America. Raleigh himself fully expected that he should have to encounter the galleons, but assured his friends that, under all circumstances, they should find his ships or their ashes at Punto de Gallo, for that he would fight while there remained a deck to stand on. That an attack was meditated by Spain is certain. If Sir Walter Raleigh, says Gondomar, should have gone direct to Guiana without touching at Jamaica, as is rumoured, it will be easy to crush him, since it will be necessary for him to leave his vessels and stores in Trinidad, while he ascends the Orinoco in boats and barges.*

Meanwhile Kemys, furnished with clear instructions, proceeded up the Orinoco with an adequate number of mariners and three hundred soldiers, under the command of Walter and George Raleigh. His orders were to make for the mines without offering the slightest molestation to native or Spaniard; but if attacked, to repel force by force. It has been already seen that, by directions from Spain, the authorities in Guiana had made preparations for crushing the English, whom they regarded as invaders. When, therefore, Kemys and his mining party disembarked and bivouacked for the night at a point midway between the mines and San Tome, they could hardly have calculated on peaceful slumbers. Their movements had in fact been watched by the Spaniards, who, as soon as stillness prevailed in the camp, made a rush upon the sleepers, in the hope of surprising and cutting them to pieces; but the English, being on their guard, repulsed the assailants, who, facing about, retreated towards the town, closely pursued by young Raleigh at the head of his men. On the brow of the hill a personal encounter took place between him and Erineta, a Spanish captain, who, having fired off his piece, felled his youthful antagonist with a blow of the stock. In another

* Carta del Conde de Gondomar à S. Md., 10 de Agosto, 1617. Simancas.

moment Plessington, the sergeant of Raleigh's company, ran Erineta through the body with his pike; after which, the English, rushing forwards, slew Palameque the governor, with his principal officers, and then set fire to the town.

Though defeated and dispersed by this sudden onset, the Spaniards, who were far more numerous than their assailants, retreated to the woods close at hand, whence at brief intervals they issued to alarm and harass the English. That there existed mines in the neighbourhood was now proved, since four gold refineries were found in San Tome. Kemys however had lost heart. Everything had fallen out contrary to his expectations: during the previous twelve months Spain had multiplied and strengthened her position in Guiana; the passes of the mountains were in her hands, her troops swarmed in the forests and along the rivers, so that in whatever direction he moved his followers were shot down at his side without his being able to catch even a glimpse of the enemy. In this hopeless state of affairs, he resolved to brave the reproaches of his General and abandon the enterprise. Returning slowly and sorrowfully down the river with news which he doubtless felt would be received almost as a sentence of death, he found Raleigh at Punto de Gallo with the fleet.

What follows stands perhaps less in need of apology than of explanation. Kemys, born and nurtured amid the winds on the Wiltshire downs, had in him the soul of an ancient Roman, and to serve his country, or satisfy his leader, would any day have leaped into as hopeless a gulf as Curtius did. He had stood by Raleigh in every turn of fortune, good or ill; had been with him in the Tower, had been shown the rack without flinching, had been always ready, in order to shield his leader from censure, to take any amount of blame upon himself.

Nothing therefore but the overwhelming grief by which Raleigh's mind was at this time stunned—for he could and did bear the prescience of the axe with equanimity—can

excuse the harshness of his behaviour towards Kemys upon the failure of the inland expedition. It is true that upon that failure hinged his own fate; it is true, and there was no disguising it, that to return to England empty-handed was to return, like Regulus, to certain death; but if the death was not to be shunned Raleigh should have so conducted himself towards this gallant gentleman, who erred, if he did err at all, more through desperate sorrow for the loss of his young leader than through any reluctance to face hardships or dangers—Raleigh, I say, should have so conducted himself that he and Kemys might have laid their heads on the same block, and left life as they had passed it together. There was nothing of which Kemys was not capable, and he may be cited as one of the noblest examples on record of the pure and heroic love of man for man. Of all the names connected with Raleigh, his is the brightest, and it is impossible to repeat or to read his story without deep emotion. It is true he fell, like Brutus at Philippi, by his own hand; but he fell in despair, not only of any longer serving his country, but of preserving the approbation of the great man, to be whose lieutenant had been the sole ambition of his life. That Raleigh loved and valued him as he deserved cannot be doubted, but it was because of this very love and esteem that he gave way to that tone of reproach which entered like iron into Kemys's soul and made him loathe existence.

In Raleigh's own account of Kemys's death—for there are two—we find some discrepancies, which, however, considering the state of mind in which he wrote, we may easily understand and forgive. He had just lost his son, a loss which at the moment seemed the greatest he could sustain; he saw in the countenances of all around him unmistakable marks of disappointment and alienation; he could not therefore doubt that in many cases, from friends and followers, they would soon be converted into accusers; over his seditious and savage crews he felt that his power was at an end,

and consequently that, instead of leading them to any new enterprise, he was in truth their prisoner. Had he been joined by the promised French squadron he might have been still his own master; but Montmorenci had proved as little reliable as James, and he would now therefore have to return to the Tower and the block, unless by some subtle manœuvre he could effect his escape from those who were eager to wreak upon him the loss of the riches on which they had confidently reckoned. Raleigh was now an old man, broken down in health, maddened by grief, embittered by disappointment, bewildered by the prospect of the troubles and sorrows which he beheld grouping themselves before him. When Kemys therefore stated his reasons for not repairing to the site of the mine, he refused to accept his explanation, upon which, in despair, that gallant officer put an end to his life.

Writing from St Christopher in March, Raleigh says, "I was no sooner come from him into my cabin, but I heard a pistol go off over my head, and sending to know who shot it, word was brought me that Kemys shot it out of his cabin window to cleanse it. And his boy going into his cabin found him lying upon his bed with much blood by him, and looking in his face saw him dead. The pistol being but little, did but crack his rib, but turning him over, he found a long knife in his body all but the handle."*

Four months later, at Salisbury, covered with pustules, blains, and blotches, he wrote amid the noise and bustle of an inn, in a brief snatch of leisure obtained by artifice, the same story with some variations. After detailing the particulars of his discussion with his old friend, Raleigh says, "He replied in these words, 'I know not then, sir, what course to take;' and went out of my cabin into his own, in which he was no sooner entered, but I heard a pistol go off. I sent up (not suspecting any such thing as the killing of himself) to know who shot a pistol. Kemys himself made

* Letter to Winwood, Works, viii. 632.

answer, lying on his bed, that he himself had shot it off because it had been long charged, with which I was satisfied. Some half-hour after this, the boy going into his cabin, found him dead, having a long knife thrust under his left pap, through his heart, and his pistol lying by him with which it appeared that he had shot himself; but the bullet lighting upon a rib had but broken the rib and went no farther."*

Arguing from these differences in the two statements, Sanderson, in his 'History of Charles I.,' accuses Raleigh of assassination. To such an accusation no reply is needed.

Thick obscurity now gathers about Raleigh's story. I am not his apologist; whatever may be thought of his conduct, my duty is clear; I have to state the truth, and nothing but the truth, and leave the reader to base his decision upon it. In the circumstances of extreme difficulty in which he stood, a straightforward policy would probably have forestalled the executioner. We speak of him as an abstraction, as a name now; he was a man then, invested with all a man's attributes, love of life among the rest. It has been seen that among the desperadoes in his fleet, the idea of casting him into the sea widely prevailed, and against this catastrophe he considered himself authorized to provide. With this view he fell back upon his French commission, which accorded to him, he said, more ample powers than that he had received from James. According to some accounts, which I know not whether to regard as facts or calumnies, he suggested to his mutinous followers the project of making up for their losses on shore by capturing the Spanish treasure fleet, which must either have involved England in a war with Spain, or have thrown him and his associates into the category of pirates. He is made by one report to confess such a design in his examination before the Privy Council, when Bacon, we are told, observed, "Then, Sir Walter, you would have been a pirate:" to which he replied, "Did you

* 'Apology,' p. 39.

ever know of any one being a pirate for millions? I would have silenced all objections by a lavish distribution of treasure."*

But this anecdote rests on too slender a foundation to be accepted as a disclosure of what took place in the West Indies. All that appears to be known with certainty is that, soon after the failure of the mining enterprise, Raleigh's fleet broke up, some ships proceeding in one direction, some in another. The peril of law, in which, as Bacon expresses it, Raleigh stood, deprived him of authority, and among men incapable of estimating personal greatness, converted him into an object of derision. No trustworthy narrative of what took place between his departure from the West Indies and his arrival at Plymouth has been hitherto discovered. For a while four ships seem to have followed his flag, but whether or not they accompanied him to Newfoundland I have been unable to ascertain. The probability is that by the time he reached that island two ships only remained to him, the 'Destiny' and the 'Jason,' commanded by Captain Pennington. His intention to put into some French port having apparently transpired, a mutiny took place at Newfoundland, when a majority of the sailors insisted on returning to England. All exact dates are lost. Turning their prows eastwards, they reached Kinsale some time in May, where, for reasons which I have never seen explained, Pennington's ship was seized by the Lord-deputy, while the 'Destiny' continued its voyage, and made Plymouth Sound early in June.

Here, to intimate that his Odyssæan wanderings were at an end, Raleigh dismantled his ship and sent her sails on shore. At no great distance on the Devonshire coast lay that Hayes Farm, from which, half a century before, he had departed to commence, under the greatest of English sovereigns, his studies and his toils, and now, broken down by

* Conversations with Wilson in the Tower, September 26th, 1618. State Paper Office.

calamity and disease, he was returning to lay his head at the feet of the most worthless. "His friends," says Contarini, "are now endeavouring to obtain a free pardon for him from the King, that he may be at liberty to come to Court, and not go back to the Tower."*

Instead of conceding to Raleigh's friends the pardon they sought, James, on the 11th,† issued a proclamation, denouncing the proceedings at San Tome as a breach of instructions, and inviting all persons who might be able to supply information to give evidence before the Privy Council.

In spite of the hostility discoverable in this document, Raleigh set out for London, but had proceeded only twenty miles, when he was met at Ashburton by his relative Sir Lewis Stukeley, Vice-admiral of Devon, who had been commissioned to arrest him, and take possession of his ship. Stukeley possibly saw nothing particularly base in the office he had undertaken; but the judgment of his contemporaries was so different, that he was thenceforward distinguished by the appellation of Sir Judas Stukeley. More sure, perhaps, than he wished of his victim, the Vice-admiral was eager to obtain possession of his property, and therefore, instead of repairing with him at once to London, went back to Plymouth, where the two relatives lodged in the house of Sir Christopher Harris.

I have said that Stukeley felt, perhaps, only too sure of his prisoner, since he seems at first to have purposely held him with a loose rein, that, if he would, he might effect his escape and leave him master of the 'Destiny.' To suggest the course that should be followed, he made visits into the country, sometimes remaining absent two or three days. Reflecting on this, Raleigh formed the design of escaping to France. Through Captain King, who still clung

* Despatch of June 21st (N.S.). Venetian Archives.

† The proclamation is dated June 9th, though it seems to have been issued on the eleventh. State Paper Office.

to him, he hired a bark bound for Rochelle, and directed it to lie to till he should come on board.

Late one night he repaired with King to the beach, and pushing off in the dark, approached to within a quarter of a mile of the 'Rochellois;' then, yielding suddenly to the force of some other motive, put about the boat and returned to land. His conduct may by many be thought wrong; but, in my opinion, he acted wisely and fortunately, since it was better that he should die—better for us, as well as for himself, when and how he did—than that he should have drawled out his life as a fugitive in a foreign land, with a great abatement of the admiration with which mankind now regard his career. The love of life, it is true, prompted one more effort at escape; but I am glad the purpose was defeated, first by reflection, next by accident, otherwise the life of Raleigh would have lacked its great moral, and missed the blaze of glory in which it set.

On the 25th of July, Raleigh, with a considerable suite, left Plymouth, and arrived in the evening at the house of Mr Drake, where Stukeley received letters from the ministers ordering him to advance with greater speed. At sight of the pursuivant, Raleigh is said to have changed countenance, and to have exclaimed bitterly against Fortune; the desire, also, to effect his escape revived and gained strength in proportion as it became more difficult. He spent the Sunday at Sherbourne, at the house of Sir Edward Parham, and on the following day set out with his wife and attendants for Salisbury, a distance of thirty-five miles. On approaching this city he alighted from the carriage, and walked down the hill, accompanied by Manourie, a French quack in Stukeley's service, in whom, not suspecting him to be a spy, he began, we are told, to repose some confidence.

Wishing to obtain leisure in order to draw up an account of his proceedings, he here determined to feign illness or madness, or both. By Manourie's aid he covered himself with blains and blotches, so that for the appearance of sick-

ness he substituted the reality, and being ignorant of the nature of the medicines he took, may have had his brain purposely disordered. In this diseased state the idea of escape returned with redoubled force; Lady Raleigh was sent forward on Tuesday to prepare his house in London, and Captain King to hire boats and a vessel in the Thames.

He then applied himself to the writing of his 'Apology,' but became so ill, that Stukeley, despairing of his life, consulted the Bishop of Winchester, a kind and good man, who sent three physicians to attend the illustrious prisoner.

On Saturday, the 1st of August, James visited Salisbury, and in all likelihood saw Stukeley and the spy, and learned from them whatever they had to communicate. It may even be suspected that these worthy agents received instructions to conduct themselves so as to win upon their prisoner's confidence, in order the better to betray him.

That Raleigh expected to be sent for on this occasion by James we may infer from the following passage in a letter from Chamberlain to Carleton:—* "Sir Walter Raleigh was at Salisbury, but he had no audience either of the King or Council; by reason he was so sick and weak, and withal so broken out all over, that it is verily thought to be a leprosy, or else he hath taken a dram of something to do himself harm."

Leaving Salisbury, they travelled on by way of Andover, Hartford Bridge, and Staines, to Brentford, where, at an inn, Raleigh was visited by La Chêne, a French gentleman, who informed him that Le Clerc, the agent of France at James's Court, desired to speak with him on his arrival in the metropolis.

On the evening of Friday, the 7th of August, Raleigh arrived in London, and was once more under the same roof with his wife and only son. His friends, meanwhile, had been using their utmost exertions either to obtain his pardon, or, failing in that, to secure him, through the assistance of

* August 8th, 1618. State Paper Office.

Le Clerc, a passage to France. In these kind offices many persons of the highest distinction—James's Queen among the rest—were actively engaged; and to oblige them the envoy was willing to hazard the utmost resentment of James and the displeasure of his own sovereign. Lady Carew saw M. Le Clerc, and ascertained from him that, in his endeavours to serve and save Sir Walter Raleigh, he was not acting by the direction of his Government, but on his own authority, in order to meet the wishes of the great commander's friends in this country, particularly Anne of Denmark. To understand why the Queen should interest herself so strenuously on Raleigh's behalf, it must be borne in mind that she was opposed to the marriage of her son Charles with a Spanish princess, and desired rather to obtain for him a wife in France. Could Raleigh, therefore, succeed in making his way into that country, he might be able to further her designs at the French Court. The means by which Anne carried on her negotiations with Le Clerc are indicated rather than explained; but it seems that it was by the agency of a French gentleman, who had access to the backstairs of the palace. The full particulars of this intrigue may never perhaps be made known, but a contest was certainly going on between James and his consort.

The negotiations with the French envoy were in progress during Raleigh's journey from Plymouth to London, but there is no ascertaining the exact date of Lady Carew's interview, an account of which was afterwards extorted from her when the Court was engaged in fabricating some pretext for shedding Raleigh's blood. The French Government, it was known, would welcome the great commander, partly to cause uneasiness to Spain, but chiefly with the design of profiting by his services in America. Yet these things were rather understood than expressed. Lady Carew maintained to Sir Thomas Wilson, that when she inquired of Le Clerc what Raleigh would do in France, he replied, *Il mangera, il boiera, il sera bien.*

On the day after Raleigh's arrival in town, while Captain King and his subordinates, Cotterell and Hart, were hovering about the Thames, Raleigh's friends flocked to him at his house. The jeopardy in which he stood no one could disguise. Since the death of Winwood not a friend remained to him in the Cabinet, while the person who had succeeded that upright statesman was, next after the Stuart, his bitterest enemy. At eight o'clock in the evening the French envoy, with his secretary, La Chêne, repaired secretly to Raleigh's house, where, having been admitted, he passed through the great hall, and was led up-stairs to the gallery and requested to wait. Raleigh then went forth from the parlour that he might converse with the envoy without being overheard. Le Clerc's sole object in this visit was to explain the plan he had formed for insuring Raleigh's escape from England, and his good reception in France. He had a bark, he said, in readiness, apparently at the mouth of the river, and had arranged all the means by which the illustrious prisoner might safely convey himself on board. He was then to make all sail for Calais, where La Chêne would be ready to receive him with a passport, and letters to facilitate his journey and insure him an honourable reception.

For reasons not easy to be understood, Raleigh preferred trusting to the arrangements made for him by Captain King. In discussing these plans, the whole interview with Le Clerc was consumed. In order that as few persons as possible might be acquainted with the coming of the French agent, Raleigh called no servant to attend him to the door, but went himself down the stairs, which with the habitual politeness of his country Le Clerc opposed; Raleigh persisted, however, though he stopped at the foot of the stairs, and peeped into the hall, to discover whether there were any persons there who might observe him.

On the following day, which was Sunday, Raleigh was sitting in the parlour with his wife and a number of friends,

among whom were Mr and Mrs Pagenham, Sir Edward Gorges, Sir Lewis Stukeley, Mr Craddock of Westminster, Mr Emanuel Gifford, Mrs Thynne, Raleigh's niece, who had been maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, and many others, some, acquaintances made by Bessy in his absence, and some his or her relatives, when La Chêne came and passed through the parlour, but whether noticed or unnoticed does not appear. This interview with La Chêne probably took place, like the one of the preceding day, in the gallery, but with no result.

Adhering with fatal tenacity to his own plan of escape, Raleigh remained quietly in his house till night, when it had been agreed he should repair to the Tower Dock, where King was to wait for him with two wherries. He had flattered himself into the belief that he had secured the services of Stukeley by the promise to make good to him whatever loss he might sustain in furthering this design; but in truth the Vice-admiral had disclosed the whole contrivance to James and his ministers, who ordered William Herbert, with a number of men, to keep watch unobserved about Raleigh's house.

Ignorant that he was moving in the midst of enemies, Raleigh, as the hour of departure drew near, disguised himself, in the hope of slipping out unobserved, by putting on a false beard, and a hat with a green hatband. His papers and effects were deposited in a cloak bag, which, with four pistols, was all the luggage he took with him. Accompanied by Sir Lewis Stukeley, young Stukeley, and his own page, he then took leave of his wife and son, and passing over the threshold which he was never to cross again, proceeded towards the place of rendezvous. There the faithful King and the traitor Hart were found with the wherries. To the question if all things were ready, King replied in the affirmative, and that the cloak bag and pistols were in the boats. Wishing probably to discover whether or not he were suspected, Stukeley now saluted the captain, and asked whether

he had not hitherto conducted himself like an honest man; to which King, who seems to have been not quite free from doubt, replied, "that he trusted he would continue so." The whole party then stepped into the wherries, and the watermen began to pull.

What appearance the Thames presented on that memorable August Sunday night, it would be difficult to figure to ourselves. In these days it would be crowded with steamers, boats, and craft of all kinds, fringed thickly with gas-lamps, and swarming with pleasure-seekers. It was different then. Here and there the dark hull of some lugger, brig, or collier, helped to thicken the shadows on the water, while the eyes of the fugitives detected the presence of a single wherry shooting through the darkness.

From an observation of the boatmen, it soon appeared that Mr William Herbert had transferred his vigilant watch from the land to the water, for they said he had just taken boat, and made as if he would go through bridge, but returned down the river after them. Part of the truth now flashed athwart Raleigh's mind; he saw clearly that his project had been discovered, but clung nevertheless to the hope that, availing himself of the ebb tide, he might, if the watermen would co-operate, resist all attempts at capturing him, and make his way by force to the bark at Tilbury.

To ascertain the amount of his chances, he observed that a foolish quarrel with the Spanish ambassador had made it necessary for him to absent himself awhile from Court, and pass over into the Low Countries. Instead, however, of displaying the daring natural to English sailors of all classes, the miserable boatmen, inspired with terror by James's despotism, burst into tears, protesting they durst not oppose the King's authority, and declining the ten pieces of gold which Raleigh offered them for their pains.

Knowing it to be immaterial where his victim should be seized, Stukeley encouraged the watermen to row on, as did likewise Captain King, who was in the other boat with

the younger Stukeley. They passed Deptford, and were drawing near Greenwich, when they were crossed by another wherry, which Raleigh felt persuaded was come in pursuit of them; but King, who seems to have still cherished a favourable opinion of the Vice-admiral, urged their pressing forward, affirming that if they could but reach Gravesend he would stake his life they might pass over to Tilbury. The stoppages occasioned by their frequent consultations spent the tide just as they came opposite what are now the great gunpowder magazines of Purfleet, and here, the watermen protesting it would be impossible to reach Gravesend before morning, Raleigh conceived the idea of landing, and pursuing his way to Tilbury on horseback, a plan which Hart and Stukeley encouraged; the former engaging to procure nags, while the latter said he would himself, if necessary, carry the cloak bag half a mile or more. Captain King, however, insisting on the impracticability of this scheme, they rowed on, probably to a reach called the Galleons near Plumstead, about a mile beyond Woolwich.

In the only account left us of this night's adventure there is much confusion and contradictory statement. Sometimes we are led to believe that the wherries were to bring Raleigh to the bark at Tilbury, or at least to Gravesend, but when they neared the Galleons, we discover it had been concerted that they should at this point quit the wherries, and perform the rest of the voyage in Hart's ketch; for we are told that several small vessels of the same class coming in sight, Hart began to express his doubt whether any one of them were his. Raleigh now saw they were betrayed, and gave orders to put about the boats in the hope of reaching his own house before morning, at the same time questioning Hart strictly respecting the arrangements he pretended to have made. From his quibbling and equivocating one inference only could be drawn, which was converted into certainty when, having rowed back a few hundred yards, they saw and hailed a wherry, obviously in chase of them, the

crew of which declared they were there for the King.

Raleigh, who to some extent had been active hitherto, now became passive—the game was up, and he saw it—every one around him grew to be an object of suspicion, save King, whose integrity could not be doubted. The remainder of the night was passed in that despondency which had settled upon him at Plymouth, and been more or less his companion from the moment of his disembarkation until now. Still he would not entirely relinquish the hope of escape, for which reason he sought earnestly to return to his own house, from whence alone he could have any chance of effecting it. He therefore besought Stukeley, who had hitherto conducted himself so artfully as not to awaken in his kinsman the least suspicion, to declare to the King's officers that he was his prisoner, which, Stukeley's rank and authority being superior to theirs, would prevent his being handed over to them. To this the traitor, running no risk by the stratagem, cheerfully consented, and in order to obtain substantial proofs of his captive's gratitude, hugged and embraced him with all possible show of affection. They likewise for a considerable time conferred together in whispers apart, and Captain King saw Raleigh take something from his pocket—probably jewels—and give it to his betrayer.

On arriving near Greenwich, the Vice-admiral saw that the moment for throwing off the mask had arrived. He therefore declared bluntly that, it being impossible to take Raleigh back to his house, they must land here, and when they had done so, and stood on Greenwich Bridge, Stukeley proposed to Captain King that he should affect at least to forsake his master, and range among his accusers, which, though Raleigh himself seemed to think it might be expedient, King refused to do. He was then arrested by Stukeley's orders and given in custody to two of Sir William St John's and Herbert's men, that no communication might take place between him and the chief prisoner. Here at a tavern they passed what remained of the night; and in the

morning, while proceeding towards the Tower, King overheard Raleigh say, "Sir Lewis, these things will not redound to your credit;" to which, whether the caitiff made any reply or not, the captain has omitted to relate. At the entrance to the Tower King was separated from his master, who, in parting, said to him, "Stukeley and Cotterell have betrayed me;" adding, "for your part, you need be under no apprehension, it is I am the mark that is shot at."

Then Captain King, in what frame of mind may be easily imagined, took leave of Raleigh for ever, inwardly committing him to the care of that Power, with whom, at the conclusion of his narrative, he says, "I doubt not his soul resteth."*

* See King's Narrative in Oldys, pp. 533—537.

CHAPTER XXI.

IMPLACABLE RANCOUR OF SPAIN.

Once more in the Tower, with little or no chance of emerging from it, except to ascend the scaffold, Raleigh displayed, as was natural, many fluctuations of spirits and temper—now buoyed up by transient hope, and now reluctantly giving way to the conviction that his days were numbered. They were so, indeed; for when seventy-nine should be added to the course of his life, he would be at rest.

Hitherto no full account of this last portion of the hero's career has been laid before the world, and yet it may in many respects be regarded as the most interesting, if not the most important. For more than two thousand years mankind have perused with unabated curiosity and emotion the narrative of the brief interval which separated the Athenian philosopher's sentence from his death. Being imprisoned, however, among a civilized people, and in a free state, though subjected for the moment to capricious oppression, he suffered no insult, but, like a captive at large in his own house, was visited by his wife and children, and by his friends, who came and went at their pleasure. It was different with Raleigh. All who approached him were enemies, spies, traitors, instructed by a cruel Government to wring from him by cajolery, by simulated kindness, by false promises, by threats, such information as might seem to palliate the murder it contemplated.

I say *murder*, because, finding nothing in his recent

conduct which would appear to justify the infliction of capital punishment, James and his ministers were driven back upon the sentence of 1603, which, I trust, I have proved to have been iniquitous. But why put him to death at all? Did James find it impracticable to breathe the same air with the great Admiral? Why not connive at his escape into some foreign country, by which the guilt of shedding his blood would have been avoided? It is very certain that, however unappeasable the King's hatred may have been, he discovered in the aspect of public opinion indications which for some time made him shrink from the crime he was urged to perpetrate. But what were the circumstances which created the urgency for Raleigh's assassination? The leading fact that he was sacrificed to gratify the vindictiveness of Philip and the rancour of his ambassador has been all along known; but hitherto undeniable proofs that such was the case have not been laid before the public. I shall adduce them now. While bringing them forward, however, I do not desire to keep out of sight the truth that Raleigh had been engaged in very questionable negotiations with France, which I have already described; but those dealings, though they exasperated James, were not the ground on which Raleigh's life was sought and taken. At the risk of being betrayed into some repetitions, I must preface what I have further to relate by recapitulating certain circumstances: first, when James granted Raleigh a commission, he knew it was to Guiana he intended to proceed; second, he was fully competent to decide whether he regarded Guiana as a British or as a Spanish dependency; third, if he looked upon it as a British possession, he must have felt that no reference need be made to Spain in the matter; fourthly, if he believed Guiana to belong to Spain, he must have known that, in aiding Raleigh to prosecute his voyage thither, he was implicating himself and his Government in a piratical undertaking. In whatever light viewed, the enterprise took place in the manner and with

the results I have described. Wherever, in the course of it, there was any collision between the English and the Spaniards, the latter were the aggressors, while the former only made use of force in self-defence. From my narrative, which I believe to be fair, the reader will, I persuade myself, have been led to this conclusion; he will, at all events, be able to estimate the amount of falsehood and malignity discoverable in the statements of the Spanish Government.

While Raleigh's fleet still lay in the Thames, that Government, acting upon information received through its ambassador and spies in England, sent orders to the Council of War for the Indies to strengthen the defences, and reinforce those garrisons in Guiana and the neighbouring countries which might be thought to lie most open to attack. The assurances given by the English King and ministers that Raleigh would abstain from all acts of violence towards the King of Spain's subjects and territories were treated as of no value, though securities had been entered into by Raleigh's friends to make good any damage he might occasion. No sooner, however, had the news of what took place at San Tome reached Spain than, without inquiring into the correctness of the statement they had received, the most violent and indefensible proceedings were recommended by the Council of State to the King. Two days later, that King, basing his orders on the Council's views, forwarded a despatch to Gondomar, directing him what steps to take in England for the purpose of obtaining from James the sacrifice of Raleigh and the seizure of his property, together with that of his securities, as compensation for the damage and injury sustained by Spanish subjects in America. These papers, though prolix and confused, are very craftily drawn up. Two sentiments prevail throughout—apprehension of a quarrel with England, and the double desire of money and vengeance. Gondomar, or his representative if he should be absent, was cautioned not to employ threatening language, lest it should occasion war, for which Spain was by no means

prepared. The policy secretly resolved upon, should the English Government decline punishing Raleigh, was to make reprisals on all English property found in any part of Philip's dominions; but this was rather to be suggested than broadly laid down. Relying on James's ignorance of the real facts of the case, Philip and his ambassador affirmed that no preparations whatever had been made for the defence of the Spanish possessions in South America, in consequence of the trust they had reposed in the promises of England; though two days before the date of this solemn assurance peremptory orders had been issued by Philip to double the forces which, during the preceding year, had been sent to America. Much stress was laid on the report that preparations were making at Plymouth to add large reinforcements to Raleigh's fleet, which was false, and on the statement, which may have been true, that the English in Seville were much elated at the intelligence of Raleigh's achievements in Guiana.*

For some time a plan had been in agitation for uniting a squadron of English men-of-war with what was pompously called the Ocean fleet of Spain, with a view to protect the coasts of the peninsula from the ravages of the Barbary corsairs. As far back as the previous year, the idea had been entertained by both Governments, with the addition of stationing a naval force at the entrance to the harbour of Algiers to cut off the pirates in their attempt to put to sea. From this enterprise Philip now shrank, not knowing what consequences might flow from the admission of English ships of war into the ports and harbours of his kingdom. Gondomar was therefore instructed to defer entering into

* Minuta del consejo de Estado à S. Md. sobre loque contienen dos consultas de la Junta de guerra de Indias acerca de lo ejecutado por Gualtero Rale enlas Islas de Barlovento, 7 de Junio, 1618.

Minuta de Real despacho al Conde de Gondomar con la relacion de lo que habia hecho Gualtero Rale enlas Islas de Canarias. Madrid, 9 de Junio, 1618. Simancas.

any agreement on this subject till the way in which James meant to deal with Raleigh should be known.

Meanwhile, the greatest possible solicitude was felt at Madrid lest the English should take offence, rush to arms, attack the Spanish settlements in America, capture the homeward-bound fleet, and annihilate Spanish commerce almost at a blow. No symptom of this apprehension and solicitude was however to be suffered to appear to the British Government, which, on the contrary, was to be assailed by strong and incessant representations of the outrages, devastations, and massacres perpetrated by Raleigh's fleet in America; together with the resentment felt by Philip, and his firm resolve to insist on reparation.*

Gondomar, whose natural bloodthirstiness was sharpened by ill-health, went on unceasingly harrying James and his ministers to hasten Raleigh's execution, a point which Philip had evidently more at heart than any compensation in money. Alluding to the despatch of which I have spoken above, Contarini observes, "The Spanish ambassador has received an express, with orders from his King not to leave this until he witness the thorough completion of the punishment of Sir Walter Raleigh; so he had to return to his Majesty, and complain of the excesses committed by him on the island of St Thomas † in the West Indies, without any regard for persons or holy places: he had audience the day before yesterday, whereupon the proclamation against Raleigh was repeated, and he is understood to be now under arrest at Plymouth, but in a bad state of health." ‡

A few days later, the intelligence reached England that the Spanish Government had actually issued a proclamation commanding the seizure of all English ships in the king-

* Minuta de Real despacho al Conde de Gondomar, 9 de Junio, 1618. Simancas.

† The writer here confounds the island of San Tomé with the town of the same name on the main.

‡ Contarini. Despatch of July 5th, 1618. Venetian Archives.

dom, upon which Gondomar had another audience of James, in which he gave great offence by "his resentful and harsh language." Upon this, the Spaniards, never popular in England, became doubly hateful, especially among the mercantile classes, whose irritation was probably increased by the rumours now prevalent of the arrest of Raleigh.*

Meanwhile Gondomar's maladies, whatever they may have been, assumed a character which, in spite of the orders he had received, determined him to return to Spain. On the 25th July, therefore (N.S.), he set out from London with his countess, and proceeded to Dover, whence he passed over to Flanders in an English ship of war.

The day before he departed, however, he enjoyed an opportunity of learning with what feelings he and his countrymen were regarded in London. "One of his gentlemen," says Contarini, "riding through the street, went over a little child who was incautiously at play in the middle of the road, and although more frightened than hurt, so great a mob collected and followed the Spaniard, that, notwithstanding his galloping at full speed, he had much ado to reach the embassy at Ely House, where the crowd and uproar increased in lieu of diminishing, and in a short time all the neighbouring streets swarmed with people, who in the foulest language commenced cursing all Spain, and most contemptuously abusing the subjects of that crown; after which, with a shower of stones, they broke all the windows in the house, and were proceeding to force the door, which it would have been impossible to defend against so violent an attack, had not the Lord Mayor made his appearance, and in virtue of his office quieted the people, though he experienced great difficulty in causing them to disperse."†

When James, who had often complained to Gondomar that he was unable to keep his subjects in order, heard of the tumult in the City, he commanded the Mayor to wait

* Contarini. Despatch of July 12th, 1618. Venetian Archives.
† Idem. Despatch of Aug. 2nd, 1618. Venetian Archives.

upon Gondomar with the assurance that the rioters should be severely punished. With this ovation, Gondomar, it was hoped, would be satisfied; but the Venetian remarks that the circumstance proved the hatred of the English people for Spain, and how keenly they would resent the marriage of Prince Charles with the Infanta. In the hope of diminishing popular aversion for the Spaniards, James issued a proclamation, in which it was affirmed that the rioters had been pardoned entirely through the intercession of the gentlemen of the Spanish Embassy.*

Ulloa, who had been left by Gondomar to conduct the business of the embassy, carefully avoided touching in his despatches upon the circumstance of the riot, and enlarged instead on the extraordinary affection and esteem with which the Count was regarded by all classes of persons. He alluded however incidentally to the fact that, in spite of the professions he might choose to make, James was actuated by no love for the King of Spain—still less he might have added, for his insolent ambassador—but simply by fear, which, he significantly adds, is "very powerful with him."†

Towards the end of July, James, the sole business of whose life consisted in the enjoyment of coarse pleasures, found himself encountered by his usual difficulty—want of money. The means by which he escaped from the dilemma were curious and characteristic. The sale of honours is a practice of ancient date in England, and was resorted to on this occasion by James. To appear in proper state at Salisbury, where the meet of the grand stag-hunt was to be held, no less a sum than forty thousand pounds would be needed. How was it to be raised? After much deliberation, James's ministers hit upon the plan of elevating a wealthy alderman's son to the peerage for fifteen thousand pounds, and of creating four new earls—among whom the husband of

* Contarini. Despatch of Sept. 28th, 1618. Venetian Archives.

† Carta Autografa de Julian Sanchez de Ulloa, 26 de Julio, 1618. Simancas.

Raleigh's niece Barbara was one—for twenty thousand more. The supply, however, still fell short of the demand, so that five thousand pounds had to be raised by forced contributions from the officers and servants of the royal household. With pockets thus filled, James with Baby Charles and a glittering retinue set out for Salisbury, where he arrived while Raleigh, dejected and covered with sores, was employed in writing his 'Apology' at a miserable inn. At the same time, James's unhappy wife passed through London on her way from Greenwich to Oatlands. As the new Earl of Leicester held the place of Chamberlain to the Queen, both he and his Countess may be fairly presumed to have exerted their influence—though none may perhaps have been needed—to keep Raleigh in her affectionate remembrance, since throughout the dark period upon which we are entering she stood unfalteringly by the man who had been the friend of her favourite son, and who cherished the same political aspirations with herself.*

To understand the peril in which Raleigh now stood, it will be necessary to consider attentively a report which the Council of State at Madrid addressed to Philip, based on two despatches of Gondomar, one dated June 24th, the the other July 15th. From this report it appears that the ambassador, having laid before James the Spanish view of Raleigh's proceedings in Guiana, had extorted from him a promise which must, I think, be acknowledged to be the most base and iniquitous concession ever made by one sovereign to another. When Lord Carew, the steady and affectionate friend of Raleigh, knelt before James, and besought him to extend pardon to his kinsman, the reply he received was, that the accused for whom he pleaded should have a fair hearing. How far he could have meant what he said, may be seen from the report under consideration, which says, that in compliance with the requisition of

* Carta de Julian Sanchez de Ulloa à Su Majestad, 30 de Julio, 1618, Simancas.

Gondomar, Raleigh and his accomplices should be thrown into prison, and their property confiscated; that with regard to their persons, he would deliver them up in order that they might be punished in Spain, or, if Philip desired it, hung in England. As the choice had thus been left to the King of Spain, the Council urged that the odium of the execution ought to be left to James, under pretence that where the crime had been perpetrated punishment should be inflicted. To illustrate Gondomar's sentiments towards Raleigh, we must consider the various means to which he had recourse, in order to precipitate James into the perpetration of the desired crime. Reckoning confidently on his fears, which throughout life exposed him to the contempt of the world, he apprehended no chance of war from the most offensive proceedings, and therefore recommended not only the laying of an embargo on all English vessels in the Azores and Canaries, but that the fleets of Spain should capture and make prize of whatever English ships they might meet at sea, which would expose James to the complaints and outcries of his whole people.*

Acting upon the advice of his Council, Philip forwarded a despatch to Count Gondomar, in which occurs the following ominous passage: "You will write to your Secretary Ulloa, desiring him to make use of all possible means in order that that King may at once punish Walter Raleigh and his accomplices as he has promised you; since for many reasons this seems more advisable than that they should be sent here. Let it also be understood that satisfaction for damages must be given from the property of Walter and his securities, the amount to be assessed by my ministers, which I consider the most proper course to be followed." He then informs the Count that the seizure of English ships had been postponed; but that it should be immediately carried into effect if the King of England showed any remissness in inflicting punishment on Raleigh.

* Minuta del consejo de Estado à S. Md. sobre Waltero, 11 de Agosto, 1618. Simancas.

CHAPTER XIII.

WILSON'S MISSION.

When, on the 10th of August, Raleigh found himself once more in the Tower, the first step taken by the authorities was to search his person and take possession of his papers and effects. His old lodgings being occupied by the Earl and Countess of Somerset, he seems to have remained in Sir Allan Apsley's house for a few days, after which he was removed to Lord Cobham's former apartments in the Wardrobe Tower.

On Wednesday, two days after Raleigh's commitment to the Tower, Lord Bacon, with a number of other Commissioners, repaired thither to examine him respecting his motives for attempting to escape into France. No record of their questions or of his answers has been preserved; but he is said to have admitted that he had been wrong in attempting to escape. Being able to make nothing of such an admission, another meeting of the Commissioners was appointed for the following Monday at Whitehall, when Lord Carew, Sir William St John, and Sir Lewis Stukeley, were commanded to attend, to investigate probably Anne of Denmark's complicity with Raleigh, for it was said to be "on some business of the Queen's."*

While the examinations, frequent and protracted, were in progress, Raleigh put forward his 'Apology,' respecting

* Archbishop of Canterbury to Sir Thomas Lake, August 14th. MS. State Paper Office.

which, as might have been foreseen, opinions were divided; they who judged from the English point of view approving, while all members of the Spanish faction remained unconvinced.*

Nearly a month having been consumed in fruitless examinations, the Court, baffled and profoundly irritated, appears to have formed a design which carries us back to the times of Alexander VI. and Cæsar Borgia. The mysterious proceedings of a French gentleman, who, while the royal family were at dinner, forced himself into the palace, threw James into paroxysms of terror. Some second Ravaillac, he perhaps thought, hired by Raleigh or by his Queen, had come with the intention, which heaven must have averted, of hurrying his sacred person to Windsor vaults. What was there he would not do to preserve himself from the assassin's knife? He consulted with the caitiff Naunton, with the libidinous and truculent Buckingham, and a plan seems to have been agreed upon between them which they at once proceeded to carry into execution.

There was at that time about the Court an individual named Wilson, with the countenance, sentiments, and language of Abhorson, whose very appearance suggested the idea of some horrid crime, and inspired the wish to commit it. This wretch was now admitted by Naunton to a secret audience with James, at which it appears to have been agreed that Raleigh should be preserved from the executioner by such a death as the blood-boltered Banquo met with. Eager to give proof of his devotion to his employers, Wilson hastened to the Tower, where his gait and aspect inspired universal horror and loathing. A whisper passed among the officers of the fortress that Raleigh's days would certainly be few.

Shocked at the evident object of Wilson's coming, Sir Allan Apsley, father of Mrs Colonel Hutchinson, was put by instinct upon his guard, so that he at once determined

* Chamberlain to Carleton, August 20th, 1618. State Paper Office.

not to be trepanned into the fate of Sir Gervase Elwes, whose gallows may have been still standing on Tower Hill. With the revolting familiarity of an executioner, Wilson stepped into Raleigh's apartments, accosted the prisoner, and then studied the hindrances and facilities furnished by the nature of the place. Several objectionable peculiarities presented themselves. The room had two large windows, looking on one side towards the Mint, on the other into the great court, over passages into which letters might be thrown, and from which prying persons might also possibly discern what took place within—an arrangement which presented obstacles to his purpose. Still, if at night he could get into his hands the keys of Raleigh's apartments, the thing might be done, and he therefore demanded them abruptly from the Lieutenant. As he at the same time required that Raleigh's personal attendant should be removed, and a man of his own, bearing likewise the same name with himself, substituted in his place, Apsley saw at once the whole drift of his scheme, and peremptorily refused compliance.

What was to be done? In Venice, the maxims of whose Government were in that age much studied in England, State prisoners whose public execution was thought objectionable were often dealt with secretly by poison or the stiletto, and James appears to have lulled himself into the belief that, if Raleigh could be disposed of after a similar fashion, it would save him from the obloquy of publicly sacrificing an illustrious subject for the purpose of obtaining a Spanish wife for his son. The Venetian Council of Ten seldom, we may be sure, had obstacles thrown in their way by the impracticable consciences of their gaolers; but, in England, every Lieutenant of the Tower was not an Elwes, though no midnight assassin that ever traversed the subterranean passages of the Piombi surpassed Wilson in bloody recklessness.

The hatred that instinctively springs up between greatness and baseness, when forced into proximity, warmed immediately into life in Wilson's heart, so that he fiercely

longed for the opportunity of dealing with Raleigh. Offended by the refusal of Sir Allan Apsley, who he saw clearly suspected his intentions, he, in a tone of injured innocence, laid his complaint before Naunton, who explained it to the King. The matter now assumed an awkward character. It was obvious that the nature of their project was understood in the Tower, and the apprehension suggested itself that, if anything should happen suddenly to Raleigh, the whole country, and the world, would comprehend by what agency he had been taken off. Naunton, therefore, was ordered by James to return for answer to the belligerent officers that his Majesty referred them "to the old custom to be adhered and abided by." *

It seems clear that Wilson had never heard the story of Raleigh's attempt at suicide in 1603, otherwise he would surely have referred to it while chronicling his conversations with Raleigh, who, he affirmed, often spoke of suicide, and maintained that, under circumstances, a Christian might have recourse to it and be forgiven. The assassin in intention, who had small faith in Raleigh's Christianity, would only have been too glad could he, by taunts and sneers, have provoked him to put his theory in practice. Raleigh, however, whose desire it always was to die in the light, and not by his own or Wilson's hands in the Tower, spurned the suggestions of the tempter, and used all reasonable means to prolong the life which God had intrusted to him.

Meanwhile, Sanchez de Ulloa, to whom particulars of the examinations to which Raleigh was subjected were communicated, was sedulous in transmitting an account of them to Madrid. Knowing in what tone Philip and Gondomar, who had by that time reached the Spanish capital, would expect him to write, his style brimmed over with malignity and virulence. "I have already spoken," he says, "of the evasions which Raleigh has invented to avoid

* Naunton to Wilson, Sept. 14th, 1618. State Paper Office.

the punishment of his own crimes, which he fears and merits. They are now examining him in earnest on the intentions and designs with which he left England for Guiana, and on the insolences, cruelties, robberies, and murders that he committed in the countries of the King our Lord, chiefly in San Tome." *

But though the occurrences in Guiana constituted the chief subjects of accusation against Raleigh, greater subtlety and pertinacity were displayed by the Commissioners in the endeavour to implicate Raleigh in the intrigues which Anne of Denmark was carrying on with France for the purpose of thwarting her husband's desire to secure the hand of Donna Maria for Charles. Under any other circumstances, less importance would have been attached to his dealings with the French agent and his secretary; but, suspecting that his chief object in attempting an escape to France was his wish to further in that country the designs of his benefactress, James's petty jealousy was fanned into a flame. "Tell him," he exclaimed, with vehemence, "that he owes allegiance to no one but to me!" Anne, it appears, secretly admitted French agents to her presence by the back-stairs, and Raleigh, after one examination, expressed his fear that, by the disclosures into which he had been betrayed respecting his interviews with Le Clerc and La Chêne, he might have alienated the Queen's affections.

With these facts before him, which, however briefly stated, are undoubted, the reader will understand the feverish eagerness of James and his commissioners to wring from Raleigh every minute particular of his interviews with the French agent. Whatever Philip, Gondomar, or Ulloa might fancy, it was perfectly understood by Court and Commissioners that the outcries against the proceedings in Guiana originated in political jealousy, and were irreconcilable with facts; but as they might, nevertheless, obstruct his darling

* Carta de Sanchez de Ulloa à Don Juan de Ciriza, 12 de Setiembre, 1618. Simancas.

design of obtaining a consort for his son, James's passion became more vehement as the obstacles to its fulfilment multiplied.

By the law of nations, Le Clerc was placed beyond James's reach, but his secretary occupied no place within the charmed circle, so that, when his visits to Raleigh had been discovered, he was immediately arrested and thrown into prison. When first called before the Council in the palace of Whitehall, he was accompanied to the entrance by the envoy Le Clerc, and a number of other French gentlemen, who continued lingering about the lobby till the angry Councillors sent their secretary to order them to depart.*

To what extent La Chêne's examinations were pushed, I am unable to say; but if the reader happen to be gifted with sensitive nerves, he will probably shudder at one of the questions put to him at Whitehall—he was asked if he were a gentleman. Had he replied in the negative, he might have been instantly made acquainted with the rack and the Scavenger's Daughter; but the employés above a certain rank of a foreign sovereign could not be so treated without serious offence, though James's own subjects, even when ministers of the altar, might with impunity be torn to pieces by the rack. This point having been cleared up, the examination proceeded.†

Commissioners. How long have you known Sir Walter Raleigh?

La Chêne. More than seven years.

Com. Have you seen Sir Walter frequently, and if so, what is the nature of your business with him?

La Chêne. I saw Sir Walter frequently before his voyage, and always found him courteous and friendly, because he

* Carta de Ulloa à Ciriza, 24 de Setiembre, 1618. Simancas.

† Throughout these examinations I have substituted the first for the third person, but in other respects have given a literal translation of the original documents.

was partial to the French. We never spoke, however, on any but familiar subjects.

Com. How often have you seen Sir Walter since his return, and what was the object of your visits?

La Chêne. Merely to confirm our former friendship by sympathizing with him in his troubles.

Com. Where did you visit him?

La Chêne. At his house.

Com. How many days after Sir Walter's arrival?

La Chêne. On the second or third, I am not certain which.

Com. Who was present at the interview?

La Chêne. I do not remember.

Com. Were there many present, or not?

La Chêne. Six or eight, but I do not recollect their names.

Com. In what language did you converse?

La Chêne. In French.

Com. How many letters have you written to him or other persons on the subject of his escape?

La Chêne. I have not written any.

He was then told that they could show him some, to which he answered, that they must be forged.

Com. How could you be so presumptuous as to visit Sir Walter Raleigh, he being under criminal prosecution, and in disgrace with the King?

La Chêne. I visited him no otherwise than as a friend.

Com. How could you, being a foreigner, presume to visit a criminal; and do you not think that by so doing you have offended his Majesty?

La Chêne. No; because I never spoke of his Majesty in a way to give offence.

Com. Do you wish to say anything respecting the letters you have written?

La Chêne. No.

Upon this La Chêne was sent back to prison.*

* Las preguntas que los senores del consejo de Estado de Inglaterra

Three days later his examination was resumed.

Com. Do you know Dr Turner?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Have you known him long?

La Chêne. Four or five years.

Com. What business have you had with him?

La Chêne. When I went to see him it was on no particular business or design.

Com. How often have you gone to see him?

La Chêne. I don't know.

Com. How long is it since you last saw him?

La Chêne. Not long.

Com. Do you remember the time?

La Chêne. About a fortnight.

Com. When you were together did you speak of the affairs of Sir Walter Raleigh?

La Chêne. We did.

Com. What did you say?

La Chêne. Only expressed our sorrow for his misfortunes.

Com. Did you converse on any other subject?

La Chêne. No; we spoke of nothing else.

Com. Did not Dr Turner confide to you his fears for having shown favour to Sir Walter Raleigh?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Were you at Oatlands when a pursuivant came to summon Dr Turner before the Council?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Did the Doctor inquire of you what answers he ought to make?

La Chêne. He did.

Com. What advice did you give him?

La Chêne. The best that I could give him for his good.

Com. What was that?

La Chêne. I advised him to tell the Council that Lady

hicieron al Señor de la Chêne caballero Frances y respuestas de éste. 19 de Setiembre (N.S.), 1618. Simancas.

Raleigh, who is a relative of his, had requested him to obtain an audience of the Queen, and beg her to intercede for her Ladyship with the King. I gave him no other advice.

Com. How many letters have passed between you and Dr Turner?

La Chêne. I have never written to him.

Com. What will you say if we show you some of those letters?

La Chêne. I remember nothing about any such letters, so that I have nothing to fear.

With this reply, the second examination closed, and La Chêne was reconducted to prison. Out of the circumstances of this case, it was hoped at Ely House that causes might arise which would lead to a rupture with France. The exultation therefore of the Spanish Secretary was great, especially as James every day gave fresh proofs of his entire devotion to Spain. While the diplomatic agents of Louis Treize were treated almost like felons, and Raleigh in the Tower was subjected to daily insults and persecution, Ulloa exerted an influence scarcely inferior to that of Gondomar himself; by this his Castilian pride was so much gratified, that he thought it necessary to draw a picture of his success to his master, Philip; and while so doing, he affords us a curious glimpse of James's Court. Repairing early to Buckingham's apartments in the palace, and expressing a wish to see the King if not inconvenient, the Marquis replied in the negative, "and leading me into his chamber," says Ulloa, "went into the presence of the King. Returning a moment afterwards, he conducted me into the private closet of his Majesty, whom I found near a window reading some papers. On seeing me enter, he lifted his hat, and advancing two steps from the window, with great kindness took me by the hand, in the presence of the gentlemen of his chamber, and those of the Council. I told him that notwithstanding the good news I had received of his health, I was extremely glad to be an ocular witness of it, that I

might be able to certify to your Majesty that it was excellent, because I knew your Majesty would be very glad to hear such news; to which this King, lifting again his hat, replied that he respected no one in the world more than your Majesty, and that, consequently, he merited your love and friendship. . . . . He told me I might be assured that in the matter of Walter Raleigh, and whatever else he had promised to the Count Gondomar, he would keep his word. . . . . To this I bowed very low, and expressing my sense of gratitude for it, took my leave."*

Finding Raleigh's apartments in the Wardrobe Tower unsuited to his purpose, Wilson made loud complaints; he thought Sir Allan Apsley must have forgotten himself, to indulge Raleigh with comfortable chambers, while he located him and his man in a bare prison room over-head. Affecting politic reasons, he wished to have the arrangement reversed, so that while he lay below, his illustrious captive might be thrust up into the bare room, which, though objectionable for him and his man, he thought quite good enough for Raleigh. Tractable as the prisoner was on most points, he displayed some obstinacy on this, saying he would not go up thither unless they would carry him by force.†

While some captives were treated with harshness and rigour, a strange laxity was observed towards others. The Earl of Northumberland and the Countess of Shrewsbury, for example, now monopolized all the best lodgings in the Tower, so that the Lieutenant found himself in much perplexity to decide where he should locate Raleigh. With Wilson by his side, he went up and down the whole fortress in search of suitable rooms, but could find none without dislodging Lord Carew from the Brick Tower, which was assigned to him as Master of the Ordnance. One of its apartments, indeed, was from time to time given up to

* Carta de Sanchez de Ulloa à Su Majestad, 24 de Setiembre (N.S.), 1618. Simancas.

† Wilson to Naunton, September 12th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

young Lord Percy when he came to visit his father, a mark of respect to the old Earl which Wilson considered preposterous. His opinion prevailed. With an innate propensity to scatter insults, Naunton snatched eagerly at the occasion to humble the proud Percy and annoy the Master of the Ordnance, and directed the appropriation of the Brick Tower to Wilson and his captive, adding soon after a female to the list of Raleigh's gaolers, in the person of Lady Wilson.

It is impossible to proceed with this story without often contrasting the feelings and behaviour of educated men in those days and in these. If the erection of a State scaffold were possible now, the sympathy of all that is generous in England would surround and cling to the sufferer, no matter what might be his offence, whereas it was then common in persons of the highest position to jeer and scoff at the fallen. In a fit of dejection caused by Wilson's arrival at the Tower, Raleigh had exclaimed, "Let the King do even what he will with me, for never man was more desirous to die." *

This being repeated to James's chief Secretary of State, raised to that eminence by his relative Buckingham's profligacy, that polished individual replied, "I hope you will every day gain ground of that hypocrite that is so desirous to die—mortified man that he is!"

It seems evident that Wilson had suggested in a letter, which it was thought politic to destroy, some mode of proceeding with Raleigh which promised to further the design of the Court: "The King," says Naunton, "is well pleased with your *prescription*, and will, I think, long for the ripening and mellowing of your examinations and conferences by which you are to" . . . Then follow words which obviously argue a foregone conclusion—"the best comfort I can give you is that *you shall not be long troubled with him.*" †

As soon as arrangements could be made, Raleigh, with

* Wilson to Naunton, Sept. 11th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.
† Naunton to Wilson, Sept. 14th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

such property as he possessed, was removed to the Brick Tower, which afforded Wilson an opportunity of examining and cataloguing all articles of curiosity or value that had been left to him. The report having been circulated that Raleigh still carried about his person a diamond of great price given him in other days by the Tudor Queen, a strong desire to obtain possession of it appears to have sprung up among the principal officials. Wilson was therefore commissioned to make inquiries respecting it, but without success. The only jewel of value he could discover was a sapphire ring which the captive used as his seal. The removal occupied a whole day, but when it was completed, Wilson was filled with exultation. "Since my last letter of yesterday morning," he says, "I have been wholly employed in removing this man to safer and higher lodgings, which, though it seems nearer heaven, yet is there no means of escape from thence for him to any place but hell."*

Allowing Sir Thomas Wilson to be, on the subject of suicide, a fair exponent of the sentiments of his age, we must infer that it was generally regarded as an offence which placed those who were guilty of it beyond the sympathy of men or the forgiveness of God, for though hardened beyond most of his worst contemporaries, Wilson's notion was, that all persons who destroyed themselves were not only doomed to eternal punishment, but entailed utter ruin on their posterity. Affecting the solicitude of inquisitors, Raleigh's persecutors told him, they must take away his drugs and extracts, that he might not possess the means of poisoning himself; upon which he contemptuously observed that, if he wished, he could find death by running his head against a post. Meanwhile, the great point aimed at was to elicit some information respecting the dealings of Raleigh and James's Queen with France, for which purpose Wilson appears to have been authorized to hold out the usual bait of a promise of life in case of compliance, which he was afterwards, with affected

* Wilson to Naunton, Sept. 17th, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

regret, to confess he had no right to give. In the performance of this duty he gave proof of subtlety which would have done no discredit to a Jesuit. Putting on the mask of genial simplicity, sympathy, interest, and even affection, he protested that he would peril his fortune and his life for the promotion of Raleigh's welfare, while in his communications to the Court he overwhelmed him with the coarsest ridicule and abuse, described his stately courtesy as astuteness and glozing, suggested that nothing but a rack and a halter could bring him to speak the truth, and chuckled at the conviction that he could only escape from the Tower to the bottomless pit.

CHAPTER XIV.

EXAMINATIONS AND CONFRONTATIONS.

Synchronous with these proceedings took place the examinations of the captains who had sailed with Raleigh to Guiana, of which I have met with no account, together with those of La Chêne, of which I believe the only record in existence is found at Simancas. The third examination began with the question—

Is it true that in Brentford you offered succour and help to Sir Walter Raleigh in case he wished to escape?

La Chêne. I never spoke of it, but merely expressed my commiseration and compliments.

Commissioners. What promises did you make to Walter when you visited him at his house a second time, and what induced you to go thither?

La Chêne. When I visited him at his house it was only to assure him of my sympathy and console him in his misfortunes.

Com. If it be true that you had no design or power to help him, why did you write to assure him of your assistance and friendship?

La Chêne. It is true that I have written, but my letters have been only those of friendship and sympathy.

He was then told that the time would arrive when letters should be shown him expressing great promises, to which he replied that, when his letters should be produced, they would be found to contain no such promises.

Com. Why, then, were you not satisfied with sending him one letter; wherefore did you write him a second and a third?

La Chêne. I do not think I have written more than one on that subject.

Being told that he would not now confess having written such letters, because in his former examinations he had denied it, he replied that he had no recollection of having written them.

Com. Have you so depraved a memory that you cannot recollect what you did so recently?

La Chêne. The said letters were of so little importance that I do not remember anything about them.

Com. Did the agent of France send you to Raleigh to assure him of his friendship and aid?

La Chêne. I went to see him as a friend, and no otherwise.

Com. Do you know whether the agent wished to furnish him with letters to France after his escape?

La Chêne. I know nothing of such a circumstance.

Com. Do you know to what persons in France the said agent wished to recommend him?

La Chêne. No.

Com. What pensions did the French agent promise him from the King his master if he could effect his escape?

La Chêne. I have never heard of any arrangement of the kind being made between them.

Com. Why, then, has Dr Turner spoken to you so often on that subject?

La Chêne. He has only spoken to me respecting his own exoneration, and what he should answer to the gentlemen of the Council.

Com. Did the French agent think of employing Raleigh in reviving the treaty of marriage between the Prince of Wales and a princess of France?

La Chêne. If such a thing were to be negotiated, it would be done by a prince, and not by Raleigh.

Cmo. Is it true that, through the influence of the last ambassador of France in England, Raleigh had a commission from the Most Christian King, or from his admiral, to go to sea?

La Chêne. The said ambassador never communicated anything of the kind to me, nor did I ever hear him talk about it.

Com. Do you know that a Frenchman named Captain Farge went to France with that object?

La Chêne. I have heard it said, but don't know the truth of it, because I had nothing to do with that business.

Com. Did the said Farge present himself to the Admiral of France, or to some other person?

La Chêne. I know nothing about it.

Com. Did you see the said Captain Farge after his return from France?

La Chêne. No.

Com. Did the said Farge obtain the commission or not, and did he give it to Raleigh?

La Chêne. I know nothing about it.

Com. Did Raleigh put to sea before the arrival of the said Farge in London?

La Chêne. I understood that Raleigh had departed before the arrival of Farge.

Com. Do you know whether the said Farge and Raleigh afterwards met, or not?

La Chêne. I have heard it said that they met at Plymouth.

Com. Do you know whether he gave the said Farge the command of any ship?

La Chêne. I have understood that Raleigh gave him the command of a vessel of forty or fifty tons' burden, but that he never returned.

A few days later, the Council having met at Hampton Court, resumed the examination of La Chêne at ten o'clock in the morning. After what fashion he had been treated

since his last examination is not known, but his whole manner was now changed, so that he seemed ready to confess anything and everything.

Com. Will you deny that you have treated three several times with Sir Walter Raleigh?

La Chêne. It is true, and I confess it to be so.

Com. Did you not promise him a vessel, and everything necessary to effect his escape?

La Chêne. I did.

Com. Did the French agent send you with messages of that kind?

La Chêne. The French agent did order me to do those things, otherwise I should not have done them.

Com. How many times did you see Sir Walter Raleigh by order of the agent?

La Chêne. Every time I went to see him it was by his order.

Com. Why, in your first answers, did you always affirm the contrary?

La Chêne. Because I understood the time had not come for declaring it, but now my conscience compels me to do so.

Com. Do you know the handwriting and signature of the said Raleigh?

La Chêne. I know it very well.

Com. Did you believe what the said Raleigh wrote in his letter?

La Chêne. I cannot say otherwise, since I have already confessed it.

The gentlemen of the Council then caused certain letters of Sir Walter Raleigh to be read to La Chêne which contained an account of the whole matter, and La Chêne confessed that it was all true.

Com. Is it not likewise true that you and Dr Turner have often conversed on the same subject?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Do you not believe that you have greatly offended the King by such proceedings?

La Chêne. I was compelled to do all I did by my master's orders.

Com. Is it not true that when you last visited Raleigh the French agent was present to confirm the promises you had made?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Will you maintain all you have advanced in presence of the agent of France, if confronted with him?

La Chêne. Yes.

In the afternoon, when business was resumed, the first question was: Have you anything to alter in the statement you made in the morning?

La Chêne. No.

Com. Do you remember what you said?

La Chêne. Perfectly well.

Com. When you see the French agent, will you adhere to what you have advanced?

La Chêne. Yes.

At this point the French agent was brought in, and in his presence the statements made by La Chêne were read. He was then asked whether or not he admitted them to be true. The agent answered that there was no truth in them; that he had never seen Raleigh or sent any one else to see him; that La Chêne's head was turned by his imprisonment, so that he knew not what he was saying or doing, but was seeking to escape from prison by accusing him.

Here the members of the Council left the apartment to wait upon the King and learn his decision; and on their return Lord Bacon, addressing the agent, said his Majesty was much surprised that such proceedings should have been carried on by him in violation of the friendship existing between the two crowns, which no one desired more to preserve than his Majesty; and now that the agent had endeavoured to break it, he forbade him to exercise his official functions, since he no longer recognized him as an agent; he was therefore commanded to live privately till his Ma-

jesty should have informed the French King of his proceedings, and learned his decision respecting them. The Council then, on its own authority, ordered La Chêne to be conveyed to the Tower by four of the King's Guards,* but when the barge was on its way a countermand overtook it from the King, consigning La Chêne to his former prison.

Perceiving with how little consideration the members of the Privy Council were inclined to treat him, Le Clerc's temper was aroused, and he determined to stand upon his dignity. When summoned therefore to Whitehall, he caused it to be understood that he expected to be treated with the same ceremony and distinction as were shown to the English agent in France, meaning that when he entered the Council Chamber all the members of Council should stand uncovered as he did, which was conceded to him.† When Le Clerc arrived at the palace, he was accordingly received by the members of Council uncovered in the hall, near the gallery where the King usually gave audience to ambassadors. No new topic was discussed, and Le Clerc denied in the most absolute and peremptory manner having been at all engaged in Sir Walter Raleigh's attempted escape. He was then requested to walk in the gallery while the Council retired to consult together. Presently after he was called into the Council Chamber and confronted with Sir Walter Raleigh, who repeated his statement concerning the offer made to him by Le Clerc. With intrepid coolness, the Frenchman replied that what he said was only in the hope of saving his own life by endangering others. Raleigh then endeavoured to prevail upon the agent to admit what was undeniable, especially since no danger could thereby arise to him, since he was not a native of England or subject to its laws. The examiners then said to Le Clerc that there was no need of any further proofs, since both Sir Walter Raleigh and his own secretary La Chêne contradicted him in their presence.

* Carta de Sanchez de Ulloa à Ciriza, 5 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.
† Contarini to the Signory, Oct. 12th, 1618. Venetian Archives.

The Lord Chancellor Bacon added, "Remember what you were told last Wednesday at Hampton Court. I now repeat to you that the King no longer recognizes you as the agent of France, and will receive nothing through your hands." Le Clerc replied that he had been installed in the office he held by the King of France, and that no one could prevent his attending to his duties except that King on whom alone he depended; then attempting to revert to business, he said, "Sir, remember what I told your Lordship the other day about the poor French gold-wire-makers, who are suffering very great injustice, and who hope that through the instrumentality of your Lordship they may secure their rights according to the agreement made between France and England." But the author of the 'Novum Organum' turned his back on him, and walked away without making any reply, upon which the agent also departed.*

By one authority it is affirmed that Le Clerc admitted, in presence of the Council, a part of Raleigh's statement, namely, that he had called on him at his house in Broad Street, in consequence of having received a letter from him stating that he had something of importance to communicate for the service of the King, his master; but that, on his arrival, Raleigh observed that, when he should be in France, he would explain the nature of the business to the King himself. Other admission than this Le Clerc refused to make. On returning to his house, and reflecting upon the proceedings of the Council, he drew up a concise declaration,† exactly agreeing in substance with the above statement, said to have been made verbally, and to that declaration he set his name and seal. He then despatched to France a courier bearing to his sovereign a circumstantial narrative of all that had taken place.‡

* Discurso de todo lo que paro en el consejo de S. Md. en Whitehall, 6 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.

† Declaracion de M. le Clerc, agente de Francia, 6 de Octubre (N.S.), 1618. Simancas.

‡ Contarini, Despatch of Oct. 5th, 1618. Venetian Archives.

Finding that nothing more was to be extracted from the agent, the gentlemen of the Council resumed the examination of his subordinate, La Chêne; which they did after they had dined.

Com. Did you speak the truth in the last answers and declarations you made before Sir Walter Raleigh and the agent of France?

La Chêne. Yes.

Com. Is it true that, when you last went to see Sir Walter Raleigh, the agent of France went with you, having changed his dress that he might not be known?

La Chêne. It is very true.

Com. Is it true that the said agent promised Raleigh a French vessel in which to make his escape, and confirmed all the promises you had previously made him?

La Chêne. It is true; and the said agent cannot deny it.

Com. Do you know what are the agent's reasons for denying the truth so obstinately, in the face of so many proofs, in addition to your own testimony?

La Chêne. I cannot tell; but all that I and the said Raleigh have testified is the truth.

Com. Will you confirm all you have said if confronted with Raleigh?

La Chêne. I cannot deny it.

Sir Walter Raleigh was then called in, and confronted with La Chêne, when their testimonies were found to correspond exactly. Then the gentlemen of the Council, who by the King's order had come post haste from Hampton Court expressly on this business, returned to give James an account of what they had accomplished.*

* Las preguntas que los señores del consejo de Estado de Inglaterra hicieron al Sr. de la Chêne caballero Frances, y respuestas de este, 19 de Setiembre, 1618, en Whitehall. Simancas.

CHAPTER XV.

DEFEAT AND CONFESSION.

Of Raleigh's life there yet remained a month and three days, during which England, France, and Spain were kept in a state of perpetual turmoil by the changing aspects of his fate. It was one point of James's policy to interpose between the great prisoner and the public that screen of impenetrable stolidity, Sir Thomas Wilson, who might not only intercept the brightness of his genius from flashing forth upon his contemporaries, but prevent that endless trail of glory which his thoughts, if embodied in fitting words, might have thrown along the vista of his country's history.

For some time the Spanish Secretary Ulloa cherished the hope that Raleigh's negotiations with Montmorenci, Desmarets, and Le Clerc might involve England in a war with France, and the view he took of the matter was by no means inconsistent with probability. By his conduct in the affair of Raleigh's attempted escape Le Clerc had certainly infringed the law of nations; but, without breaking through immemorial usage, James could not have subjected him to punishment. To insult and contumely it was thought proper to expose him, for nothing could be more contemptuous than the act of the Lord Chancellor Bacon, who turned his back upon him in the Council Chamber, or that of James himself, who, when the intrepid agent had ridden down to Hampton Court for the purpose of presenting to him a letter from his Sovereign, refused to receive it at his hands.

The English Government, which has seldom assumed an aspect so pusillanimous and ignoble as it then exhibited, appears to have drifted into the position it occupied through the credulous intemperateness of the King, who, without inquiry, without even allowing himself time for deliberation, had been betrayed by his personal hatred of Raleigh into the pledge he gave Gondomar, that his illustrious subject and his associates should be put to death. To the fulfilment of this promise the Spanish King and ministers strenuously laboured to hold James bound; though he was not long in discovering that the pledge had been given in ignorance that the occurrences in Guiana were not such as he had been brought to believe when he gave it, and that accordingly he might have honourably retracted his word. But in that case he foresaw he would have to accept two consequences highly distasteful—the relinquishment of the Infanta, and the suspension of all commerce with Spain. Being ignorant of the real weakness and poverty of that country, his timidity may even have induced him to fear an immediate appeal to arms. He, therefore, long after the truth had broken in upon his mind, pretended to put faith in the statement of the Spaniards, that Raleigh had perpetrated revolting outrages, cruelties, and murders in South America, in territories which he now resolved not to call his own.

Affecting to be possessed by this persuasion, he, on the 29th of September, addressed two letters to Louis XIII., in which we discover the utmost virulence against Raleigh, together with much indifference as to whether the complications arising out of his case should lead or not to hostilities with France. We ought, no doubt, to be prepared to find falsehood cropping out abundantly in such documents, yet it is impossible to avoid smiling at James's reference to the love he had felt for Louis's father, whom he abhorred so thoroughly that he could not even avoid the indecency of attacking him before his guests at table. However, the point for consideration now is, his simulated belief in the

Spanish account of Raleigh's proceedings. To prove to Louis how blamable his agent Le Clerc had been, he describes as follows the individual to whom he offered succour:—"Sir Walter Raleigh, a person condemned as a traitor to our crown, and recently returned from the West Indies, where, expressly against our instructions and orders, he practised such insufferable cruelties upon the Spaniards as to furnish cause for breaking the peace and great friendship existing between the Spanish crown and ours."*

James then proceeds to view the conduct of the French agent from the point of international law, insisting that he might legally have punished him, but that through courtesy to Louis he had left his chastisement to him. Immediately on the receipt of this unfriendly missive, Louis replied in a tone still more unfriendly, insisting that his agent had been improperly dealt with, and by no means recognizing the right of the King of England to act as he had done. "We have been informed," he says, "that our agent there has not been dealt with in so favourable a manner as has been customary, and that the Council of England has proceeded against him *for things of very small consideration*, by ways unheard-of until now." Then, setting aside James's testimony, Louis proceeds to inform him that he has recalled his agent, in order to learn the truth of the whole matter from him.†

About the same time, an incident occurred in France which co-operated in embittering the relations between the two Courts. James had sent over Dr Mayerne, a man of unfortunate repute in his profession, to transact some business with the Huguenots, but his presence in France no sooner became known than he was banished the kingdom. Becher, our agent in Paris, was directed to complain of this

* Carta que el Rey de Inglaterra, escribio al Rey de Francia, enviada por el Marques de Buckingham, al Conde de Gondomar: y traducida de Frances en español à la letra, 29 de Setiembre, 1618. Simancas.

† Traduccion de una carta que escribio el Rey de Francia, al Rey de Inglaterra, 13 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.

affront, and to demand why Mayerne had been expelled like a bandit; to whom the French Council replied, that "the King of France was not accountable to the King of England for his acts, neither was he in a condition to be in fear of any one; and that the King of England should govern his own kingdom, and not meddle with that of France." At this language, which it must be owned was somewhat rough, James was extremely indignant, and it was generally understood that Le Clerc's treatment was quite as much intended as a set-off for that of Mayerne, as on account of his interference in Raleigh's affair.*

Princes less tame than James and Louis might have converted this epistolary skirmish into a cause of national hostility, especially as they recalled their ministers and adopted a tone of bluster in their correspondence; but, as was foreseen from the first by the representatives of Venice and Spain, the matter went no further.

Raleigh, meanwhile, having been subjected to incessant persecution, to examinations and confrontations before the Council, to personal insults from James and Naunton, conveyed to him through Wilson and Sir Allan Apsley, seems at length to have grown weary of carrying on the struggle. If he requested permission to write a few lines to his wife, Naunton and James had to be consulted before so poor a favour could be granted, and when written—though this he did not know—his letters were subjected to the scrutiny of both secretary and monarch before they reached their destination. In fact, his seal was broken, and the letters having been read were resealed and returned to Wilson, who then sent them to Lady Raleigh, whose answers were subjected to the same examination.

Sir Thomas Wilson, it cannot be doubted, received both from the King and his Secretary orders to extract from Raleigh, by solemn promises of pardon, such admissions and confessions as, in the opinion of those who were to judge of

* Carta de Sanchez de Ulloa à Ciriza, 5 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.

them, would compromise his life; in doing this he was to insinuate, though not positively to assert, that he had high authority for the language he employed: if the bait took, his masters were to disavow his proceedings, and overwhelm him with censure, but to base nevertheless upon his artifices the destruction of their victim. Naunton acknowledges frankly that such was the practice; and the number of heads which were thus brought under the axe was doubtless considerable. I have before me undeniable proof that it answered its purpose with Raleigh, for twenty-four days before his death he wrote to the King as follows:—

"Sir,

"Having been imprisoned by order of your Majesty, and several times questioned respecting the commission I had from France for crossing the seas, as well as in respect to the hope of aid which the French had promised me, I have always feared to speak the truth, lest I might give pain and trouble to those who had vouchsafed me many favours, and afterwards wished my liberty. But, seeing that your Majesty desires extremely to know the truth, and has strictly commanded me to reveal it; not wishing any longer to keep your Majesty in doubt and suspense, and in conscience feeling myself obliged to please my natural King and Prince, and no other—hoping, as I have always desired in other things, to give satisfaction in this, that he may have compassion on my hard and critical condition, and on my old age—I will now speak the truth to your Majesty.

"I received a commission from the Duc de Montmorenci, Admiral of France, to go to sea, which was given to me by a Frenchman named Farge, who told me that the French ambassador, Desmarets, would favour me with his letters to the Duc de Montmorenci for that end; and on the other point, of which your Majesty so much desires to know the truth, I will declare it. It is true that a French gentleman named La Chêne came to see me at three different

times; the first time at Brentford, and the other two at my house in London; at all which times he promised me, in the name of the French agent, that he would assist and favour my escape to France, and would place at my service a vessel for this purpose, and would furnish me with very favourable letters, in order that certain gentlemen in France might receive me well and recommend me to the Most Christian King, who would employ me honourably, and give me reason to be well satisfied. The same agent came with him the third time to confirm all this. And I have now resolved to make an effort to save myself in the best manner I can by disclosing the truth to your Majesty, seeing that my enemies in this kingdom have great power to do me harm. I pray you humbly, therefore, to pardon and have compassion on me, and if it may please your Majesty to grant my life, even in imprisonment, I will reveal things which will be very useful to the State, and from which there will result great wealth and advantages, at the same time that my death could occasion nothing but gratification to those who seek it with so much vindictiveness and anxiety, contrary to the natural disposition of your Majesty, who has always been inclined to goodness and clemency, on which I base all the hopes I have in this world; and praying to God that he would give your Majesty as much happiness as I could wish for myself, I am, Sir, your Majesty's most humble and most unhappy subject,

"WALTER RALEIGH."*

Had Raleigh known the true nature of James's feelings towards him, he would have spared himself the humiliation of appealing to his compassion; but sorrow, captivity, and the infirmities of premature old age had broken his spirit.

* Tower of London, October 5th, 1618. Whether or not the original be still in existence, I have been unable to discover; the above is a re-translation from the Spanish version, to be found in the General Archives of Simancas.

Though not fully aware of the King's complicity with Spain, and how completely he had put it out of his own power to be either merciful or just, he understood perfectly well the fierce hungering after his death by which Philip and his ministers were devoured. No doubt they contrived to palliate to their own minds the bloodthirstiness that inspired their proceedings, to which it would be difficult to find a parallel. Diego de la Fuente, one of the priests attached to the Embassy, who enjoyed the privilege of writing familiarly to Philip, furnishes several proofs of James's folly and subserviency to the Escorial:—"He (James) told me again that he desired or valued nothing so much as a true union with your Majesty, and that on all occasions he would give proof of this disposition, as would now be seen by the punishment of Sir Walter Raleigh, at whose examinations remarkable things were daily disclosed, chiefly from the correspondence and understanding he had with France, whose King expected by means of Raleigh to rob your Majesty of your Western Empire. The King then indulged with seeming pleasure in lively satire against France."*

Early in October, Sir Thomas Wilson, finding his mission at the Tower as unpleasant as it was unprofitable, since he could make but little way with Raleigh, while the Lieutenant and his friends loathed his presence, and gave the most sinister interpretation to his practices, prayed to be permitted to resume his labours at the State Paper Office. From the date of his application we learn nothing of Raleigh for about ten days, which he probably employed in reconciling himself to the conviction that the struggle was over, and that he must prepare for death. The town was full of conjectures respecting his fate, which changed and melted into each other like a series of dissolving views. The friends he still possessed exerted themselves in vain to turn aside the shafts of Spanish malice; while in the same

* Carta de Fray Diego de la Fuente sobre Gualtero, 12 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.

proportion, and with greater energy, his enemies, Baby Charles, his evil genius Steenie, Secretary Naunton, John Digby, above all Ulloa and the priests of the Embassy at Ely House, strained every nerve to hasten his execution.

Philip, ensconced in gloom and ferocity at Madrid, devoted a large portion of his time to the task of bringing about Raleigh's death. In obedience to his peremptory orders, Ulloa followed James to Royston, where, being granted an audience, he exhausted his powers of persuasion in the attempt to subordinate James's conscience to the revenge of Philip. The King of England had then in reality degenerated into a Spanish satrap, displaying no will of his own, but consenting to take the guilt of blood upon his head at the behest of another. Though Ulloa, familiar with the Plaza de Toros, felt doubtless much delight in cruelty, he only performed his duty in stimulating James to the murder of his subject. "I spoke very urgently," he says, "as your Majesty commanded me, in the matter of Walter Raleigh, and after referring to the promises he had made to Count Gondomar, respecting the punishment of Raleigh and those who accompanied him to Guiana, I told him how much reliance your Majesty placed in his promises, and that, since Raleigh's crimes were so evident and public, he, the King, ought to see at once that justice should be done upon him and his accomplices. . . . The King answered me favourably, saying that he had already, on account of Raleigh's affair, lost the friendship of France, whose Government had incited him, if he could with its assistance effect his escape, to lie in wait on the ocean for the Indian treasure fleet, and take refuge in France with the spoils." *

Writing on the same day to Ciriza, principal Secretary of State at Madrid, Ulloa says, "I am using every possible effort in order that Walter Raleigh may speedily be brought to justice, in inflicting which they seem to be very dilatory.

* Carta autografa de Julian Sanchez de Ulloa à S. Md., 26 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.

Towards the satisfaction for damages which he did in the Indies, I use the same urgency, and I hope that when this King returns to London, something will be done."*

The Government was at this time engaged in carrying on inquiries into the conduct of several officials, who at the time of James's accession were thought to have appropriated to themselves the property of the crown. Raleigh, as cognizant of these doings and unfriendly to the actors, was expected, it is said, to be able to throw light on their proceedings. "He has now," says Chamberlain, "good means to redeem his demerits, if he can speak to the purpose in a cause wherein he was lately examined, about the conveyance of jewels and such like matters at the King's first coming, and for which, and for the sale of lands, there is a commission come forth, which, it is thought, will shrewdly reflect upon the Earls of Suffolk, Salisbury, and others." †

Chamberlain, however, was either misinformed on this subject, or Raleigh possessed no information which James would consent to receive as an equivalent for his life. Indeed, the probability is, that if any hopes were held out to Raleigh, they were like those put forward by Wilson, mere delusions to allure him into disclosures which, though advantageous to the Court, were to be productive of no good to himself. From what James said to Ulloa at Royston on the 15th, and from the whole tenor of his language since Raleigh's return, it must have been clear to all who were in his confidence that he had resolutely determined to become an accomplice in the murder of Raleigh. No assignable political motives will suffice to explain how a man having a real belief in the existence of God could voluntarily participate in such a crime; so that we are compelled to suppose in his mind the prevalence of a hatred so fierce and powerful that it entirely blinded his sense of justice. He could not lay the least stress on the professions of friendship made to

* Carta de Ulloa à Ciriza, 28 de Octubre, 1618. Simancas.
† Letter to Carleton, Oct. 24th, 1618. State Paper Office.

him by Philip, because he was conscious, as all those who approached him were, that his own professions to that individual were false. To gratify his petty resentment, he had brought his country to the verge of a rupture with France, and he may therefore, as Ulloa suggested, have been assailed by fear lest, if he faltered now, he should bring upon himself the vengeance of Spain also. His matrimonial scheme for Baby Charles would, had he been capable of reflection, have appeared to him, as it did to all sensible men in the kingdom, rather as a well-spring of calamity than as a source of good, since they foresaw that in the actual temper of the nation any Catholic connection would almost certainly occasion those terrible events which were afterwards stamped upon our annals in characters of blood.

To this dark prospect James shut his eyes, and with the gay recklessness described by Fray Fuente, at length gave the fatal order that Raleigh should prepare for death. As far back as the 22nd the die was cast, though the public knew it not, for on that day, Raleigh having been taken from the Tower to Whitehall, was told what had been resolved respecting him. For some particulars of what took place in the four hours during which Raleigh pleaded for his life, we are indebted to a foreign witness, who however has omitted others which we should have been glad to learn. It was Bacon's ill-fortune to be under the necessity, as Lord-chancellor, not only of acquiescing in Raleigh's execution, but of sprinkling over his spirit those bitter waters of reproach and contumely by which James thought proper in his case to herald the pangs of death. "I have been told," says Ulloa, "that the Lord-chancellor of England censured him greatly for the injuries he had done to the vassals and territories of your Majesty, and dwelt on the manner in which he had abused the permission to put to sea, granted him by this King, when his professed object was to discover a gold-mine, which he had affirmed he knew where to find. In conclusion, he informed him that he

must die." Ulloa then adds what is inconsistent with all other accounts of Raleigh's last days, that on hearing this he was stunned, losing his senses for a moment; after which, coming again to himself, "I am told," the Secretary continues, "that he spoke wanderingly. They then took him back to the Tower, changed his room, servants, and dress, placed over him a guard that was changed every hour, whose business it was to remain night and day in his room and observe all his words and actions, which was necessary to prevent his taking his own life by poison, knife, or in any other manner." *

Though up to the last James's neglected and unhappy Queen made use of her utmost efforts to save Raleigh's life, maintaining that her own depended on his prescriptions, she soon discovered the bitter truth that the reason she alleged may have been among her husband's chief motives for ridding himself of her physician.† The Spanish Secretary certainly drew upon his imagination for some of the details he forwarded to his master, since Raleigh's servants were not changed, nor is there any reason to believe in the reality of the guard, or in the removal from one set of apartments to another. He may have been equally ill-informed respecting the part played by Lord Bacon, upon whom however, by virtue of his office, devolved the unpleasant duty of drawing up and forwarding to the Lieutenant the warrant commanding Raleigh's removal from the Tower to the King's Bench, preliminary to his execution.

* Carta Original de Julian Sanchez de Ulloa, 16 de Noviembre, 1618. Simancas.

† Chamberlain to Carleton, Oct. 31st. MS. State Paper Office.

CHAPTER XVI.

PALACE YARD.—CONCLUSION.

We have now reached the eve of the blackest day in James's black reign, and the brightest perhaps of all in Raleigh's life. For some time he had been suffering grievously from dysentery, fever, and ague, engendered by breathing the miasmata exhaling from the stagnant and fetid waters of the Tower ditch; but still more from the conflict with his enemies which nature urged him to carry on in defence of his life. That warfare being over, the certainty of death cleared away the mists of weakness from about him, and he was himself again—never prouder, never more stately in his bearing, more gay, gracious, or resolute, when he wooed Elizabeth in the bowers of Windsor, or trod the rocking deck in Cadiz Bay.

He had been all his life an early riser, but on the lowering morning of the 28th of October, when the pursuivant brought to the Tower Bacon's warrant to Sir Allan Apsley, the physical debility caused by illness detained him still in bed. It was eight o'clock, not a very late hour for that dreary season of the year. He rose immediately, dressed in all haste, and then, as cheerfully as if going forth to battle, joked with his barber, who observed as they issued from the gate, "Sir, we have not combed your head this morning." "Let them comb it," he replied, "that shall have it;" and then, going on in the same lively vein, "Peter," said he,

"canst thou give me any plaster to set on a man's head when it is off." *

Entering his carriage, it is to be presumed, with Peter, he proceeded under a strong guard to the King's Bench, where James's legal accomplices, Montague and Yelverton, were to complete what Coke and Heale had begun at Winchester. Upon being asked if he had anything to urge why sentence of death should not be pronounceed against him, Raleigh answered, "That the King had employed him in his service, and given him a commission wherein he styled him his 'loyal subject,' and withal gave him *potestatem vitæ et mortis*, which did amount to a pardon; for in all reason he must be master of his own life who hath power over other men's. The judges replied, that there is no pardon for treason by implication; wherefore, he must find a better plea or undergo the sentence. Then Raleigh spoke of his trial at Winchester, and maintained that all, or the far greater part of those present, did acquit him in their consciences; and that the King's gracious forbearing him so long, and but for this late accident longer would have done, even to a hundred years, if nature would have drawn out his life so long, did show his Majesty did approve his innocence." But the Lord Chief-justice, knowing what was expected of him, replied, "If Sir Walter Raleigh hath none other thing to allege for himself, the former sentence must stand good, and that the Lieutenant, by virtue of a writ, ought to deliver him to the sheriffs of Middlesex." At the stair-foot coming down from the King's Bench, stood the Clerk of the Crown, with the same writ directed to the Lieutenant to deliver him, and another to the sheriff to receive him, and carry him thence to the Gate-house.†

On the way from the King's Bench, as the carriage with his guards made its way slowly through the multitude that thronged the streets to behold the great prisoner of the

* Porey to Carleton, Nov. 7th. MS. State Paper Office.
† Idem, Oct. 31st, 1618. State Paper Office.

Bloody Tower, Raleigh noticed in the crowd his old friend, Sir Hugh Beeston, and invited him to come to Palace Yard on the morrow to see him die.

On reaching his new prison, he is said to have employed some time in writing letters to the King and others; and afterwards being joined by Dr Tonson, Dean of Westminster,* he prayed with him awhile. Weekes, then Governor of the Gate-house, appears to have been a kind and indulgent man, who put no restrictions on the visits of Raleigh's friends to him; for on this sad evening many, we are told, came to sit up with him. Unfortunately, such of his contemporaries as have left us an account of his last hours were not persons of taste or discernment, but thought more of chronicling sallies of sprightliness than of giving us such a picture as they might have drawn of his whole bearing that night. Late in the evening his wife came to him, but of what they said to each other nothing is recorded but this: she mentioned as some consolation that the Government had granted to her the disposal of his body. "It is well, Bess," he replied, "that thou shouldst have the disposal of that dead, which thou hadst not always the disposing of living."†

Shortly after midnight took place the parting scene, of which nothing has been, or perhaps need be, said: it is related he dismissed her then, when he saw probably that feelings which he might not be able to keep in check were beginning to burst up from the depth of his heart. From these he sought refuge in sleep, and probably found it; since on the threshold of their last sleep, when it would almost seem that they needed it not, men have generally a foretaste of that rest towards which they are hastening. At four o'clock, one of Raleigh's cousins, Charles Thynne, arrived at the prison, and when they began to converse, observing Raleigh to be more than usually cheerful, he expressed some fear

* Chamberlain to Carleton, Oct. 31st, 1618. MS. State Paper Office.

† 'Court and Times of James I.,' ii. 104.

lest his enemies should accuse him of affectation. "Good Charles," he said, "let me be merry for this once—it is the last merriment I shall enjoy in this world; but when I come to the sad part thou shalt see I will look on it like a man."*

The Dean of Westminster having come to the prisoner at five, Raleigh prayed with him, and according to his own conception made his peace with God. He then prepared for the axe and the scaffold, and as usual breakfasted at eight o'clock. His frame had been wasted by long confinement and malaria, which had brought on fever and ague, and to support his physical strength to go through the trying scene on which he was about to enter, "there was a cup of excellent sack brought him, and being asked how he liked it; 'as the fellow,' said he, 'that, drinking of St Giles' bowl as he went to Tyburn, said that was good drink if a man might tarry by it.'"

To lessen the crowd, which it was expected would be very great, the Government chose that Raleigh's execution should take place on Lord Mayor's-day, that the curiosity of the public might be somewhat divided; yet the multitude was so great that persons of distinction, with letters to the sheriffs from a Secretary of State in their hands, could scarcely make their way through the dense throng. The Captain of Elizabeth's Guard was known to everybody old enough to remember the great Queen, so that he might now be said to be surrounded by familiar faces. In the crowd he observed Beeston, whom on the previous day he had invited to be present, and seeing that he was unable to make his way forward, Raleigh bade him farewell, saying, "I know not how it may be with you, but I shall be sure to find a place." A little further on, he noticed an old man with a bald head, pressing eagerly towards him, and inquiring whether he would have aught of him, the old man answered, that he only "desired to see him, and pray God to have mercy upon his soul." "I thank thee, good friend,"

* Porey to Carleton, Nov. 7th. MS. State Paper Office.

said Sir Walter, "and I am sorry I have no better thing to return thee for thy good-will; but take this nightcap"—which was a very rich one—"for thou hast more need of it now than I."

The scaffold having been erected near dwelling-houses, Raleigh observed when he ascended it several noblemen and gentlemen who had stationed themselves at a window of Sir Randal Crewe's to witness his death, and because his voice was weak, he requested them to come out and stand on the scaffold, as he had something to say to them: when they had done as he desired, he made a short speech, the meaning of which has scarcely been preserved. What we possess under that name it is impossible he should have uttered, unless we assume the letter to James of the 5th of October, together with his examinations and those of La Chêne, and all his communications with the French authorities, to be forgeries. Had he denied, as he is said to have done, that he ever saw any commission, letter, or seal, from the French King, his admission to the contrary in his own handwriting would doubtless have been produced on the scaffold, to confound and silence him. We must consequently believe, either that the documents referred to were mere fabrications, or that several gentlemen who were present at his death, and heard him deliver his farewell address to the world, either misunderstood his language, or purposely misrepresented it. On this point, as on so many others connected with different stages of Raleigh's career, it seems all but impossible to ascertain the truth; the evidence on record being contradictory, though the witnesses in many cases who testified in his favour can be suspected of no intelligible motive which could have biased their judgment. If the English originals of the letters to James, and of the minutes of examinations taken at Whitehall, could be found, some approximation to certainty might be made; but, in the mean time, we are left to draw what conclusions we can from the conflicting reports that have come down to us.

The reference he made to Essex's death may have imported no more than this, that he never spontaneously sought his destruction, though the Earl had fallen by the means he had been constrained to employ to preserve himself against his machinations. He thanked God, however, that he was permitted to die in the light, that he might clear himself of many heavy imputations which had been laid upon him. The Dean of Westminster then inquired in what faith he died: he replied, in that of a Christian as professed and taught by the Church of England. The cold being sharp that morning, the sheriff kindly invited him to descend, and warm himself: to which he answered, "No, good Mr Sheriff, let us despatch; for within a quarter of an hour mine ague will come upon me, and if I be not dead ere then, mine enemies will say I quake for fear." Before laying his head upon the block, he gracefully bowed to the spectators, and taking the axe from the executioner, and feeling its edge, said, "This is a sharp but sure remedy against all miseries and diseases." He then knelt down, and having said a short prayer, gave, as had been agreed upon, the word to the executioner, "Strike!" and at two blows, his head was severed from his body.

The effect produced by Raleigh's death upon the world differed widely from that which the Government appears to have expected. A Spanish Dominican, more clear-sighted than James or Philip, foresaw that by the execution of the great Admiral the unpopularity of Spain in England would be augmented. Nothing was talked of throughout London but Raleigh's perfect death,* to avoid hearing which

* Mr Forster, in his able 'Life of Sir John Eliot,' quotes from a MS. work of that great patriot a passage on Raleigh's death, equally honourable to the writer and to the martyr. "Matchless, indeed," says Eliot, "was his fortitude. It was a wonder and example, which, if the ancient philosophers could have witnessed, they had acknowledged as the equal of their virtue . . . . His mind became the clearer as if already it had been freed from the cloud and oppression of the body; and such was his unmoved courage and placid temper, that while it changed the affection of the enemies who

James retreated to Royston; though his conscience may not have been much the quieter on account of the distance.

When Raleigh's head had been held up, and shown to the people as that of a traitor, it was put into a leathern bag and borne to a mourning coach, which Lady Raleigh had in waiting near at hand, and conveyed no one exactly knows whither. According to some the headless trunk was interred in St Margaret's, Westminster; according to others, his remains were deposited in the church at Beddington; while there is a tradition which maintains that Lady Raleigh, who certainly embalmed her husband's head, performed the same office also for the whole body, and kept them near her through life. Whatever credit may be accorded to this story, the embalmed head gradually became an object of public interest, to behold and kiss which people appear to have sometimes travelled many a mile. That strange Protestant, Bishop Goodman, tells us in his strange book, "I know where the head is kept, and I have kissed it." * For twenty-nine years Lady Raleigh survived her husband, and during that period seems, wherever she went, to have carried about with her the head of the man she had loved. The relic then passed into the hands of her son Carew, with whose remains it is supposed to have been deposited in the earth.

Such as I have described him in the foregoing pages was Sir Walter Raleigh. For many years after his death the paramount influence of the Stuarts rendered it unsafe to do him justice; since, to defend his memory was to criminate them. As the love of freedom spread, reverence for Raleigh's genius, and pity for his misfortunes, spread with it, through the efforts partly of such men as Hampden and Milton, who set a high value on his writings, and laboured to revive his fame. From the period of the Commonwealth

had come to witness it, and turned their joy to sorrow, it filled all men else with admiration and emotion." Life of Sir John Eliot, i. 34, 35.

* 'Court of King James I.,' 69.

to the present day, Raleigh has gradually risen in public estimation, until he has almost come to be considered as the great type and representative of his race—adventurous, daring, insatiable in the pursuit of power, and not over-scrupulous in the use of it, contemptuous of foreigners, remorseless in his patriotism, and recklessly eager to stamp an English impress on the whole action of the world. Through these characteristics, whether good or bad, he is seldom regarded otherwise than with deep enthusiasm by those who have familiarized themselves with his career.

To penetrate into the secret of his philosophy it is necessary to scrutinize the entire body of his writings, in some places so enigmatical as to defy positive interpretation. The position he ought to occupy among great men is hard to be determined; but perhaps they who look upon him as the greatest on record of real Anglo-Saxon origin may have formed the truest conception of his intellect and character.* One quality he had in common with the loftiest intelligences that have taken up their abode in clay—he absolutely rejected the authority of other minds, and thought himself as much at liberty as the first man to think and judge for himself on all subjects of inquiry or speculation. Ceaseless study carried on in the camp, on the ocean, in palaces and in prisons, had acquainted him with all that man from the beginning has dared to utter or think; and on looking back, even to periods dimmest and most remote, he beheld few individuals of his species who, had all his energies been concentrated on philosophical investigation, would have been found to go beyond him in subtlety, originality, or grasp of thought. But, aiming at conferring great practical benefits on mankind, he was content to forego his claim to be reckoned among the foremost of those who have marked and

* Hallam, by no means friendly to Raleigh, adopts the national opinion that he was the bravest and most renowned of Englishmen. 'History of England,' i. 355.

laid out the tracks in which men's ideas and opinions are to advance for ever.

By the ignorant and prejudiced* among his contemporaries, Raleigh was sometimes accused of atheism; but, possessing a sound mind in a sound body, he never at any period of his life furnished the slightest pretext for such an accusation. He had familiarized himself, as I have said, with the process by which systems of philosophy are constructed, partly with materials visible and tangible, partly, if I may so speak, with blocks of thought, hewn out of the metaphysical universe which, in darkness impenetrable, wraps about the diminutive sphere made luminous to us by knowledge. It is to that limitless storehouse of mystery that the founders of creeds and systems resort for powers and sanctions with which to overawe and coerce the minds of men. Law is will embodied in words: "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not steal." Why? That is what no one dares to inquire. The law carries its own sanction with it: it is an emanation of the will that brooks no opposition, but binds up inextricably punishment with transgression. In the track of duty there is light, there is warmth, there is vivifying energy: step out of it, and you feel at once the cold dark touch of the infinite, which thrusts you back shuddering to your place.

To estimate the power of a man's character, we often need little more than to witness the amount of terror with which he inspires his enemies. Lucius Sylla, after the proscriptions, standing up in the Roman senate, bareheaded and with folded arms, to defend the cruelties he had perpetrated with patriotic intentions, was gazed at with less dismay than that with which Spain and the England of the Stuarts regarded Raleigh. History supplies no parallel to the fierce thirsting for a man's blood displayed by Philip

* Archbishop Abbot to Sir Thomas Roe, February, 1619. MS. State Paper Office.

and Gondomar; or to the base subserviency of James and his craven ministers. They looked at Raleigh through an atmosphere of bewildering fear, from the pangs and pressure of which they endeavoured to deliver themselves by his death. Accordingly, when his blood had been shed, they drew a long breath, like persons escaping from the stifling weight of a nightmare, and began to entertain each other with the farce which they thought fit to enact after the tragedy. Writing to his master, Nov. 5th (16th N.S.), while he was an object of execration to all London, Ulloa observes that he continued to press for compensation for the ravages committed by Raleigh in America: "I have spoken," he adds, "to the King himself about it. After relating to me all the appeals made to him for Raleigh's life, he promised that reparation should be made, and said that he had caused a ship* with much property to be confiscated in Ireland towards making up the sum. He then delivered to me two small pieces of mineral gold, which, he said, was all that had ever come to his hands. For these I gave him my receipt."† As this document is characteristic I subjoin it:—

"I have received from the hands of his Majesty the King of Great Britain two pieces of rough gold that Sir Walter Raleigh brought from the Indies."‡

Two months after James, in humble submission to Spain, had shed the blood of his greatest subject, he received a letter of thanks from Philip, drawn up in obscure language, referring at the outset to long past dates, but suffering the joy he felt at Raleigh's assassination to pierce through the reserve which he thought it politic to affect. That the heavy burden lying on James's conscience was much light-

* This probably was the 'Jason,' commanded by Pennington.

† Carta Original de don Julian Sanchez de Ulloa, à Su Majestad, 16 de Noviembre, 1618. Simancas.

‡ Recibo que don Julian Sanchez de Ulloa dio al Rey de la Gran Britaña, 16 de Noviembre, 1618. Simancas.

ened by this communication is what we may be permitted to doubt. It ran, however, as follows :—

"I am much gratified to learn by the letter of your Serene Highness, dated June 18th (which I received by the hands of Mr Francis Cottington), the satisfaction given by the Count of Gondomar, my Ambassador, in the affairs which he has transacted in my name with your Serene Highness and your ministers; all which proceedings have been in conformity with my best wishes. The said Count has mentioned to me the goodwill that he has always found in your Serene Highness towards us; and in the demonstration made respecting Walter Raleigh, which has been such as might have been expected from our brotherhood and friendship, for the just settlement of the affair. Your Serene Highness will always find in me the same goodwill in return, as you will understand more particularly from my servant Julian Sanchez de Ulloa."*

Thus terminated the sanguinary correspondence between the Kings of Great Britain and Spain. Raleigh had passed out of their power into the domains of history and fame; and while every succeeding age has accorded to them additional scorn and contempt, it has, in the same proportion, encircled the name of their victim with additional glory, which, I am persuaded, will go on increasing as long as genius and intellect shall continue to command the admiration of mankind.

* Minuta de Carta del Rey de España al de la Gran Britaña. Madrid, 30 de Diciembre, 1618. Simancas.

THE END.

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